Mountaineering in the Land of The Midnight Sun

by

Mrs. Aubrey Le Blond

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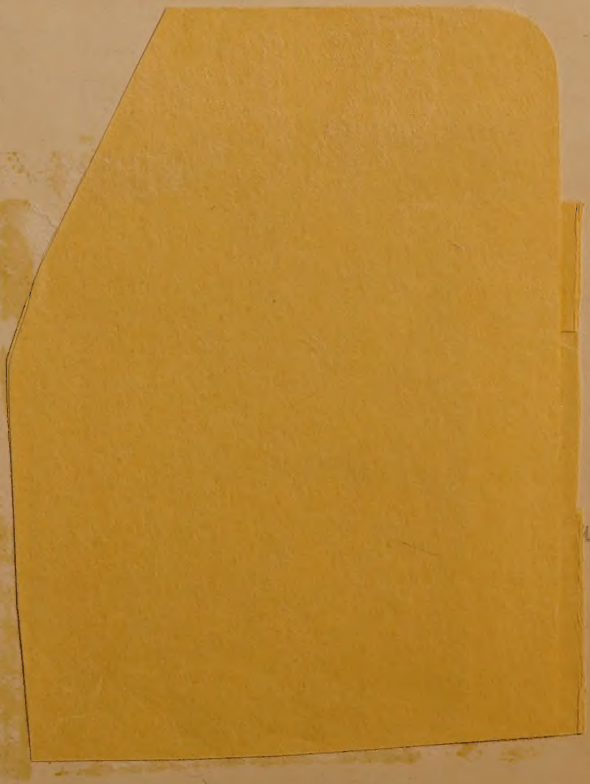

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MOUNTAINEERING IN THE LAND OF THE MIDNIGHT SUN

THE URTIND AT MIDNIGHT. IN THE BACKGROUND THE FAESTNING AND KJOSTIND.

Frontispiece.

MOUNTAINEERING IN THE LAND OF THE MIDNIGHT SUN

BY

MRS AUBREY LE BLOND

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"ADVENTURES ON THE ROOF OF THE WORLD,"
"THE HIGH ALPS IN WINTER," ETC., ETC.

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TO MY HUSBAND

WHOSE LOVE FOR OUR NORTHERN PLAYGROUND
FULLY EQUALS MY OWN, I DEDICATE
THIS VOLUME

CONTENTS

CHAP.		PAGE
	INTRODUCTION	1
I.	CLIMBING IN THE SOUTH OF NORWAY	14
II.	NORTHWARDS	18
III.	THE ISSKARTIND	41
IV.	FOUR NEW ASCENTS FROM LYNGSEIDET	50
V.	A COMMON EXPERIENCE IN NORWAY	65
VI.	STORTIND CAMP	75
VII.	SOME CLIMBS FROM JAEGERVAND	89
VIII.	A STORM AT JAEGERVAND	105
IX.	THE END OF THE SEASON AT JAEGERVAND	115
X.	OUR LAST ASCENT THAT YEAR	124
XI.	OUR SECOND CAMPAIGN IN THE NORTH	137
XII.	FIRST ASCENT OF THE HOLMEBUGTTIND, AND SECOND ASCENT OF THE DURMAALSTIND	147
XIII.	SEVERAL NEW ASCENTS	152
XIV.	SOME MORE NEW PEAKS	162
XV.	THE FIRST ASCENTS OF BALKISVARRENEBBE AND BALKISVARRE, AND THE ARRIVAL OF FRIENDS	175
XVI.	MORE FRIENDS ARRIVE, AND WE ACCOMPLISH SOME CLIMBING UNDER UNPLEASANT CONDITIONS	185
XVII.	A CLIMB IN A FOG	197
XVIII.	OUR LAST CLIMBS IN THE NORTH	207

CONTENTS

CHAP.		PAGE
XIX.	A HOLIDAY GROUND FOR NON-CLIMBERS . .	219
XX.	SOME MINOR ADVENTURES	234
XXI.	THE OTHER SIDE OF CAMP LIFE	246
XXII.	SOME WATER EXPERIENCES	256
XXIII.	PHOTOGRAPHY AND OTHER MATTERS . . .	261
XXIV.	SOME WOMEN OF NORWAY	268
XXV.	THE LAPPS, THEIR ORIGIN AND CUSTOMS . .	275
XXVI.	THE NORTHERN PLAYGROUND FOR GUIDELESS CLIMBERS	288
	MY CLIMBS IN ARCTIC NORWAY, LIST OF ASCENTS	303

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

The Urtind at Midnight. In the background the Faestning and Kjostind . . .	*Frontispiece*	
A Herd of Reindeer 200 miles within the Arctic Circle	*Facing page*	1
A Village Landing-stage	„	6
A Narrow Channel on the Coast . . .	„	6
The Lofoten Islands	„	8
Vengetinder and Romsdalshorn from near Naes	„	10
One of the Stony Slopes so often met with .	„	12
Vengetinder from Mjolnir	„	12
Skagastolstind	„	14
Mjolnir	„	16
Land-locked Water on the Coast . . .	„	18
Imboden on the Deck of a Coasting Steamer .	„	21
The Sound at Tromsø	„	22
Lyngseidet	„	26
The Stream near Jaegervand	„	30
The Urtind and a Corner of the Kjosenfjord, from the Gjoevertind . . .	„	33
On the Isskartind		41

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

The Sörfjord and Kjosenfjord from the Isskartind . . . . . *Facing page* 43

On the Isskartind . . . . . „ 46

The Sofietind: from the base of the Isskartind „ 53

Herre Gjoever's House at Lyngseidet . . „ 65

The Fornoestind from the Tytteboertind . . „ 70

Our Baggage is transported across the narrow strip of land between the Fjord and the Lake „ 73

Interior of my Tent . . . . . „ 75

The Skraektind from the Stortind . . . „ 84

Undergrowth near our Camp . . . . „ 91

Imboden busies himself in Camp . . . „ 92

The Group of the Jaegervandtinder from the Isskartind . . . . . „ 96

A Stormy Morning . . . . . „ 105

Imboden goes Shooting at Jaegervand on an Off Day . . . . . „ 115

At the Village of Jaegervand . . . . „ 128

The Author on a Mountain-top . . . „ 140

The Captain of the *Tromso* . . . . „ 140

Holmebugt from the Fjord . . . . „ 142

Kristianson and his Wife, our Neighbours at Holmebugt . . . . . „ 144

The Holmebugttind . . . . . „ 147

The Rocks of the Holmebugttind . . . „ 148

On the Durmaalstind . . . . . „ 150

The Holmebugttind from the Durmaalstind . „ 152

Jaggisjokka (the Sharp Peak to the left) and the Sörfjord . . . . . „ 154

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Njalavarrenebbe. Sphinx. Andersdalskar from Tomastind . . . . . *Facing page* 166

Imbodentind. Stor Laxvandtind from Balkisvarre . . . . . „ 175

Joekkevarre: an Unexplored Pass. Balkisvarre from Balkisvarrenebbe . . . „ 178

A Bit of the Ridge of Njalavarrenebbe . . „ 180

Njalavarrenebbe from the Eastern Laxvandtind „ 182

The Head of the Fugledal . . . . „ 187

Mr E. L. Strutt discusses his Projected Climb, and Imboden points out the way to the Glacier . . . . . „ 197

The *Sandvicken* at Holmebugt . . . „ 200

An Osprey's Nest on a boulder in the Andersdal „ 200

The Camp at Holmebugt . . . . . „ 205

Laxelvtinder from Sommerbugttind . . „ 207

Jaegervand Group. Kjostinder. Lehrbugttind from the Sommerbugttind . . . . „ 210

Looking into the Fugledal . . . . „ 212

Joekkevarre . . . . . „ 215

The Fornoesdalskar . . . . . „ 216

The Home of the Brown Trout . . . „ 218

Near the Mouth of our Little River . . . „ 222

Native Fishermen by the Tidal Lake at Jaegervand . . . . . „ 228

A Bit of our Stream . . . . . „ 231

Imboden is First on the Top . . . . „ 236

The Usual Type of Vehicle met with. Imboden has to drive himself . . . . . „ 236

Pulling up our Boat . . . . . „ 238

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Dr Norman Collie takes charge of the Baggage *Facing page* 246

A Snapshot at Midnight . . . . . „ 246

Russian Ships at Tromsø . . . . . „ 254

A View of the Sörfjord taken at Midnight . „ 261

An Ice Lake . . . . . „ 264

Lapps at Lyngseidet . . . . . „ 275

A Lapp and his Dog . . . . . „ 282

Some Lappish Women . . . . . „ 284

A HERD OF REINDEER, 200 MILES WITHIN THE ARCTIC CIRCLE.

MOUNTAINEERING IN THE LAND OF THE MIDNIGHT SUN

INTRODUCTION

I SUPPOSE that the future holds out few prizes more attractive than an excursion into the unknown. In our earliest youth we satisfy our craving for the untrodden spots of the earth by the flights our fancy takes us into the realms of fairyland. A little later, and a desert island suggests the most delightful goal we can imagine; and later still, if our life conditions and our tastes make travellers of us, it is ever the unexplored and the little-known that are our lodestars.

This yearning after unfamiliar scenes has, in its primitive form, nothing immediately utilitarian. The charm would seem to appeal

to an instinct we cannot account for, which bids us arrive at whatever point we aim for before any one else. The leaders of Polar expeditions have it in one of its strongest forms, and there are few of us who can either fail to sympathise with their ambition, or understand why that ambition takes a direction where the maximum of hardships are likely to lead to the minimum of results.

More than all others, mountain climbers may claim kinship with Arctic navigators, for the charge most constantly levelled against us is that we endanger our lives without the justification of a useful end in view. We are asked by the undiscerning why we ascend mountains, why we face the ice slope, the shattered pinnacle of rock, the deadly avalanche, the bitter cold, the burning heat? To further confound the enemy we do not hide the fact that were no view obtainable from the summit a true climber would still continue to climb; and when we have probed our minds and tried to give a reason for the faith that is in us, we still find our best answer is to urge the scoffer to

go and try the sport for himself, if he truly desires to understand its manifold joys and sorrows.

For a sport without sorrows would be but a poor thing. Who can fully value the salmon landed who has not vexed his soul over the incomparable fish he lost but the day before? Who can truly rejoice on the loftiest pinnacle of a great peak if it cost him neither trouble nor fatigue nor difficulty to get there? Who cares to triumph over a foe that shows no fight? The exhilaration of the struggle — that is what makes life worth living; and nowhere as in the mountains is a man so quickly and completely brought into the thick of a battle where mind and body alike must put forth their best energies in order to win against nature's opposition.

It must have been something of this spirit that made me, in the days of my early youth, commence, in a rather unconventional manner, my mountaineering career. Barely had I reached the tops of a few Chamonix peaks — I began by ascending Mont Blanc

from the French side, and a few days later going up and over from Italy—than I pined for something quite out of the usual routine. My guide had a programme ready to spring on me at the psychological moment, and it was "mountains hitherto unclimbed in winter."

In those days such expeditions were numerous, and a few months later we carried out a series of ascents in the Chamonix district which proved the forerunners of many more in other ranges of the Alps during the winters that followed.

But though I look back to happy days in summer on the great classical peaks of Zermatt, the Oberland, Dauphiné and the Dolomites, it was always the new expeditions that gave me the greatest pleasure; and I think myself lucky that in those days one or two considerable mountains and a fair number of new routes were still available and fell to my lot. The interest of photography was added to that of scrambling, and on many a day, when the expedition was of an inferior nature from a climbing point of view, the scenery and the pleasure of reproducing some-

thing of what one had looked upon were an ample reward.

Thus, during season after season, in summer with my St Nicholas guide, the well-known Joseph Imboden of St Nicholas, in winter with Martin Schocher of Pontresina, I went up peaks and over passes and grew familiar with much of that wonderful upland world of Switzerland that is a fairyland the gates of which stand open only to the mountaineer.

But one terrible day the whole of this was changed. Imboden's eldest son was killed on the Lyskamin, and I felt I could never again set out with his father in the light-hearted fashion in which we had so often climbed the Alpine ranges heretofore. Roman Imboden had frequently been our second guide, and the sadness of the associations called up by these familiar mountains led me to entirely change my programme for the following season.

Imboden will never lose his love of mountaineering, and he had on several occasions visited Norway and made the usual ascents. He had frequently suggested

my going there, and now it seemed to me the time had come when I might do so with advantage to my guide, who would thus have a complete change of scene after the trouble that had befallen him.

So we went the next summer to Norway, and the summers after, travelling further afield, saw us in Lapland.

In Lapland we found all the charm of the unknown. We were attracted there not only by the novelty it promised, but also by the prospect of a twenty-four hours' working day. It was delightful to think that we could start when we liked, return when we liked, and have the cheering rays of the sun always visible. In the south the nights were not dark, but then neither were they sunny. In the north, too, we hoped for—and found—all the picturesqueness of Lapps and reindeer, all the repose of a land where no travellers are seen, all the magnificence of ice-clad mountains and spires of rocks, mingled with the softer beauty of lake and fjord. There seemed a fascination of a very special sort in climbing peaks that lay more

A VILLAGE LANDING STAGE.

A NARROW CHANNEL ON THE COAST.

To face page 6.

than 200 miles within the Arctic Circle. Not many people had undertaken ascents in such northern regions. The "furthest north" of mountaineering is Spitzbergen, where, amidst many hardships, Sir M. Martin Conway and Professor Garwood made a fine series of ascents. A still more trying expedition, though one not actually within the Arctic Circle, was that of the Duke of Abruzzi and Signor Vittorio Sella to Mount St Elias. It necessitated elaborate preparations and a long journey over an ice-bound country.

But in Lapland the climate does not rob mountaineering of all comfort. The proximity of the Gulf Stream permits a wonderfully luxuriant vegetation to spring up during the nightless days of the short summer; and, though the lakes are usually still frozen near sea-level at the end of June, and patches of snow lie in sheltered corners by the waters of the fjords, yet on fine days the heat is great, and wild fruits such as the multiboer and bilberry flower and ripen all within the space of a few weeks.

At no time is our northern playground

likely to become overrun. The long journey —it took us quite three weeks to go and return — the absence of hotels and guides, and the difficulties of the language, where none speak English, all serve to protect it from invasion by tourists. Yet the climber who is undeterred by these obstacles can still find innumerable virgin peaks and mighty cataracts of ice awaiting the foot of the explorer. The Russian frontier comes unexpectedly close here and there, and a passport *visé* for Russia might be worth having in case any very tempting expedition required more than a flying journey across the boundary. It is quite useless to expect information as to the mountains from the inhabitants, who invariably pronounce all but the merest hillocks to be inaccessible. So, until the new map of that part of the country is available, the traveller must move about till he finds a group worth settling near, and must usually depend on his own party for porterage to the camp; at any rate, at first, till the people understand that he intends to settle there for the astounding purpose

THE LOFOTEN ISLANDS.

To face page 8.

of going to the tops of the neighbouring mountains.

The first to look on the mountains of the Lyngen peninsula with a view to their ascent was, I believe, that amazingly versatile person, the present Emperor of Germany, who thought of engaging the late Emile Rey as his guide and climbing from a yacht.

In 1897 Mr Hastings' party spent ten days between Lyngseidet and Kjøvik, but owing to bad weather they only managed to make one first ascent of importance, that of the Yoeggevarre, 6,285 feet, the highest mountain in the district, but a snow expedition without difficulty.

The following season, Messrs Cecil Slingsby, Hastings and Haskett-Smith camped for some weeks by the Jaegervand and made several new ascents of first-rate importance. The same year I passed the whole summer between Lyngseidet and Jaegervand with my two Swiss guides, Joseph Imboden and his son Emil, and was so delighted with the district that eventually I returned there for five summers in succession, and hope that I may yet visit it more than once again.

The journey from England, to those who have leisure, is very charming and restful. People who like the sea can take Messrs Wilson's most comfortable steamers. Those who dread a sea passage can go to Trondhjem *viâ* Dover, Calais, Brussels, Cologne, Hamburg, Copenhagen and Christiania in three days and nights of continuous travelling, or more slowly as they may prefer. From Trondhjem there are five opportunities weekly of reaching Tromsø — namely, two by the mail steamers in four days, by the bi-weekly express boats in two days, and by the tourist steamers once a week. The latter are expensive, and take nearly as long as the mail steamers.

In the following pages I hope to take lovers of mountains up a number of peaks that were till then untrodden. Some of them presented difficulties very similar to those met with in the Alps, others defended themselves against our intrusion by the excessive rottenness of the rocks of which they consisted, and the fact that till then they had been undisturbed. One could not but consider what a huge mass of loose material must have been cleared away

VENGETINDER AND ROMSDALSHORN, FROM NEAR NAES.

To face page 10.

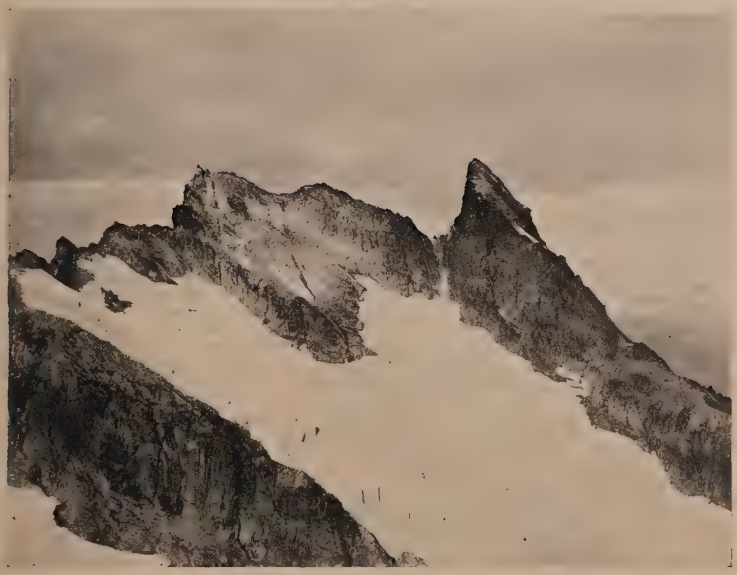
by successive ascents of the frequented peaks of Switzerland.

It is when exploring a new district that one begins to realise how much the pioneers of the Alps contributed to the ease of those who followed in their steps. This is less noticeable high up on the mountains than on the approach to them, and it is at this lower altitude that the work of the explorer is often particularly wearisome and trying. No paths conduct him by gentle stages up through the forests that fringe the bases of the hills. He has sometimes literally to fight his way through the trees, knee-deep in wet and clinging vegetation. He is irritated almost beyond endurance by the flapping of twigs and branches against his face. He gets his boots soft and pulpy in marshy ground and then emerges on to a very wilderness of sharp stones, nicely balanced on each other, so that at the first step he finds himself firmly wedged between them as if in a steel trap. He steers for the bigger boulders and attempts to pass from one to the other as he has done a hundred times before in more southern lands. No sooner, however, does he put his foot on

the steadiest-looking of the lot than it slowly and solemnly begins to heel over. He hastily quits it for another, and is quietly tipped down into a cavity at its feet, when the whole crew stand jeering over him. Finally, he takes them one by one, gives each an interrogatory shove before trusting himself to it; and, however wide be his choice of expression, he uses them all up many times over before he arrives, with an assortment of bruises he could not match in a week in the Alps, on more stable foothold beyond this very usual interlude in an expedition in a new country.

We had nothing in the nature of serious adventures during our ascents in Arctic Norway. To the people who sometimes ask me if during the long years I have spent in climbing I have had many narrow escapes I can but reply—no, for I have been too well guided. Adventures are seldom to the credit of a mountaineering party, of whom the proudest boast should be that no unnecessary risks were taken.

A few small perils we certainly encountered, of which the gravest was when we were quietly asleep in our beds. We had one or two



VENGETINDER, FROM MJØLNIR.

ONE OF THE STONY SLOPES SO OFTEN MET WITH.

To face page 12.

stirring little incidents of various sorts, but they came about elsewhere than on mountains. As I cannot, therefore, offer a record of exciting experiences I must be content with an endeavour to picture by word and camera the delightful time we spent in our northern playground. Nowadays readers of books of travel expect an ever-increasing number of illustrations. Indeed, one can almost see the time approaching when all letterpress will disappear, and pictures, in a series resembling a cinematograph, will occupy the whole of the space between the covers of a book. When our libraries include only such works we shall then feel that of a truth there is nothing new under the sun, for while in Ancient Egypt all information was written in pictures, so is the fashion of the present moment steadily tending towards the same state of things.

My publisher, however, assures me that were I thus to present the following pages to a discriminating public, I should be a trifle ahead of my century, and it is on his suggestion that I dilute the perhaps too numerous illustrations with a certain amount of penmanship.

CHAPTER I

CLIMBING IN THE SOUTH OF NORWAY

THE first time I visited Norway was in 1897. We were a party of four, including Joseph Imboden, and on that occasion we restricted ourselves to the south. We crossed from Hull to Bergen by the *Eldorado*, and had so calm a passage that I vowed I would leave well alone and never risk another! I broke my vow, however, and the North Sea was kind to me on nine occasions more. From Bergen we took a steamer to Skolden, at the head of the Sognefjord, the longest fjord in Norway, Skolden being 112 miles from the open sea. Skolden is a charming little place, with a comfortable hotel buried in a fruit garden. The landlord has the right to allow his visitors to fish in many waters, and those who desire to angle comfortably and inex-

SKAGASTOLSTIND.

To face page 14.

pensively, might do worse than settle for a little at Herre Sulheim's.

But we were bound for the mountains, so the morning after our arrival we walked up to Turtegroe, a steady pull of nearly four hours on a mule path. Here two inns offer rival hospitality. They are locally known as "The White House," and "The Other." The former was recommended to us by a card placed in our hands on landing at Skolden. It is really worth giving in facsimile:—

"The hotel for turists
on Turtegrö
is laying at the foot of the
eminent 'Skagastlstinder,' the
largest field in Jotunheim for
topmounters. The best leaders
are to be had. It is the best
place for country-layers.

Owner, Mr IVARØ IENE."

However, in spite of all these attractions, when we saw both hotels we went to "The Other"; and after a remonstrance or two about the cuisine, fared well enough, though we should have been happier had "Keating" formed part of our outfit.

Next day we strolled up to a hut on the rocky saddle below the peak we were bound for. This was Skagastolstind—said to be the hardest of the recognised ascents of Norway. I can answer for the hardness of the boards on which we slept; and as for the difficulties of the mountain, it had one or two chimneys which the local guide was glad enough to allow Imboden to tackle. Skagastolstind was really a good, pleasant climb over firm rock, and the view from the summit must be magnificent. We were unlucky in our weather, so saw but little. Indeed, the wind had been so violent during the night that I had feared we should have to return without attempting the ascent.

But I will not waste my readers' time in telling them of mountains which they can learn all about from Mr Cecil Slingsby's beautiful book on climbing in Norway.[1] We did most of the better-known Norwegian peaks in 1897 — Slogan, the Romsdalshorn, the Vengetind and Mjolnir — besides going over a tedious glacier pass across the Jostedalsbrae. It is with climbing within the Arctic Circle that

[1] "The New Northern Playground."

MJØLNIR.

To face page 16.

we are concerned, and it was to Lapland as a playground that I lost my heart.

That season showed me two things clearly: first, that the stock ascents of Norway are not worth returning to, year after year; secondly, that the mountain scenery in the south of Norway is not to be compared for grandeur and beauty with that of the Alps. I believed that if I travelled far north and settled for a couple of months in some district which had not been explored by climbers, I should be amply repaid for the long journey by finding both mountains and scenery superior to anything in the south. I always had a wish to see something of the peaks near Tromsø, and information which I had received about the Lyngen peninsula made me particularly anxious to go there.

Thus in 1898 two parties set out from England, bound for the mountains of Lapland, and what one of those parties thought of them and what ascents it was able to accomplish will be seen in the following pages.

CHAPTER II

NORTHWARDS!

It was on my birthday, 26th June 1898, that I left London for that northern land which I had seen in my dreams all the previous winter. My two guides met me at Trondhjem, Joseph Imboden, my friend and companion for fifteen seasons in the Alps, and his son Emil, who had not climbed professionally till then, but who was wildly keen to learn, and had shown such aptitude on the heights near his native village that his father had no hesitation in advising me to take him.

To non-climbers it may seem strange that I found it necessary to take a couple of Swiss guides to a district with which they were totally unacquainted. It must be remembered, however, that no guides exist in Lapland, since hardly any climbers have visited it. Further, it is usual for people to take men they know

LAND-LOCKED WATER ON THE COAST.

To face page 18.

from place to place even in Switzerland, as what is required is technical knowledge and skill rather than mere familiarity with a certain district. It is much safer to be on a difficult peak with a first-class guide who has never before ascended it, than with an inferior man who has been up many times. In the first case the party may conceivably fail to reach the top for want of local knowledge should the way be very complicated. In the second, sudden bad weather or any other emergency may land them in a position of extreme danger. Thus, odd though it may seem, the least important duty of a guide is to *know* the way; while one of his first duties is to find it. And on a really hard mountain the way varies from day to day—nay, even in ascending and descending. The changes which bring this about will be carefully noted by the skilled mountaineer. Where an inferior man will advance confidently, a first-class guide will retreat or alter his route; and where the first will fail in reaching the summit, the expert will take up his party safely and easily. Any fool may have local knowledge coupled with

sound muscles, but it takes skilled labour to lead a party unharmed through the risk of a sudden reversal of all the usual and favourable conditions found in fine weather on any given high mountain. The principles of mountaineering are the same all the world over, but it is only in the Alps that a school of first-rate guides has grown up. It need not therefore be a matter of surprise that Imboden has climbed in the Himalayas, and that other Alpine guides have been employed in the Caucasus, the Andes and the glacier region of New Zealand.

Two guides is the minimum number required for a single climber. On extensive snow-fields less than three persons on a rope are in considerable danger, for should one fall into a crevasse his companion could hardly pull him out unassisted. Again, on difficult ascents the leader ought not to be encumbered with a knapsack; and if any slight but temporary disablement occurred to one of a party of two, it might be very awkward. I think it will now be readily seen that two Alpine guides are necessary for such an expedition as mine.

IMBODEN ON THE DECK OF A COASTING STEAMER.

To face page 21.

It is essential to carefully choose the guides with a view to their travelling in countries new to them. Some guides become home-sick and miserable directly they leave their native land. Others are not quick in adapting themselves to what I may call unconventional forms of mountaineering, particularly when wine is not obtainable. Others could hardly be brought into Norwegian hotels and houses on the same footing as their masters, and no other footing is possible in a country where none travel with personal servants.

Imboden was an ideal travelling guide. On our journeys he and his son have been happy and contented, and have made friends with all classes. During our life in camp their unfailing courtesy, thoughtfulness for me and good temper, could not have been excelled, and was shown daily and hourly. To be with a man like Imboden is in itself an education, so admirable as he is in his family life, so upright in his dealings with the outer world, so tender-hearted to children and animals, so penetrating an observer of men and things, so modest in his own estimate of his exceptional

abilities. To Imboden I therefore feel that most of my enjoyment is due: not only as regards the success of our ascents, but also in the thousand and one details connected with our daily life in camp.

In fine weather the voyage from Trondhjem to Tromsø is a delightful one. Any amount of luggage is taken free of charge on the steamers, and in 1898 I had the whole of my camping kit with me, so the quantity was very great. And what a number of things are necessary for a summer spent in tents, away from towns and supplies! I had three tents, beds and bedding, tables and chairs, mosquito curtains, cooking utensils, food. Much of the latter can be had, however, at Tromsø; and here I laid in additional stores, including rice, biscuits, coffee, jam, oatmeal, corned beef, sugar, etc. Excellent bread and butter are obtainable at Lyngseidet and Kjovik, and milk and fish can usually be had wherever there are a few houses, so the commissariat department is not a difficult one to manage.

There are steamers twice a week from Tromsø to Lyngseidet, besides a weekly service

THE SOUND AT TROMSØ.

To face page 22.

from Tromsø to Kjosen, whence Lyngseidet is reached by carriage in about twenty minutes across the narrow isthmus which separates the Ulfsfjord from the Lyngenfjord. The voyage from Tromsø is a very beautiful one on a fine day, giving views of many of the great peaks and glaciers of the Lyngen peninsula.

Lyngseidet is a trim and prosperous-looking village, and belongs almost entirely to Herre Anton Gjoever, at whose house guests are received. His charming wife understands a good deal of English, and is untiring in her efforts for the comfort of her guests. She serves their meals at any hour they may desire; and the dining-room, with its prettily set-out table, is a pleasant sight; while the well-filled book-cases, pictures and photographs are evidences of a cultivated family life.

It is doubly interesting, now that Norway is a kingdom, to see how the form of small proprietorship as aimed at in some other countries works in the Land of the Midnight Sun. In many cases the owners of a bit of land have by degrees added field to field, and

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even house to house, until they have large properties in their hands. Yet there is no leisured class, as we understand it; neither in the extreme north is there the poverty we see in more fertile countries. It would almost seem as if, where Nature pours out most abundantly her riches, there the people take least trouble to gather them nor do they hoard them, but, where everything has to be earned and struggled for, there an energetic peasantry lives a self-respecting and tolerably comfortable life. The population in this part of Norway is sparse, and the neat farmsteads, often at long distances from each other, are the homes of hard-working but well-to-do families, whose cattle roam at large over pastures that are a veritable no-man's-land. Often the father, as he gets on in years, quits his seafaring life, and with his wife and daughters settles down to a pastoral existence. His sons carry on the fishing in his stead, and a rich harvest the sea often provides for them.

But, while in the country peace and plenty and employment for all seem the rule, in

towns the aspect of things is very different. Every town of northern Norway is on the coast, and the roughness and mixed population peculiar to frequented seaports are the results. Drunkenness, in spite of the stringent licensing laws, is very prevalent; and as it is impossible to obtain spirits in the *cafés*, the people procure naphtha elsewhere, and add it to their beer. In Tromsø we noticed a great deal of drinking, and no doubt in all cold countries the vice is a prevalent one.

Little in the way of crops can be grown in this part of the world. Now and then a wretched patch of oats and some miserable potatoes are seen, but nothing more. On the other hand, the flower gardens of some of the houses were a surprise, for they made quite a gay show during the short summer. Roses flourished, and quickly-growing creepers hung from trellis-work here and there, and took away the otherwise somewhat bare appearance of the wooden buildings. Not a pine tree was to be seen, the woods consisting almost entirely of silver birch.

The little village of Lyngseidet was built,

of course, entirely of wood, and boasted a shop or two, a post and telephone office, and a church, the only one on the huge fjord. On Sundays a picturesque sight was the arrival of the congregation. From many miles away they came, and all except the few who lived at Kjosen came by water. As the hour for service approached, the sails of boats running before the breeze, and the splash of oars when others had to row up in the teeth of the wind, drew nearer and nearer. The beach was encumbered with various craft, and the little hamlet took on a festive air. Greetings were exchanged, devotions were worked through, dinner was eaten, and then, before departing, the great business of the day was entered upon—no less than the weekly marketing. The shops stood open, and on this, the one opportunity in seven days for exchanging money for kind, a variety of purchases was completed, and the boats were laden with divers merchandize. The baker did a roaring trade, and his bread would be eaten when merely a trifle stale—seven days after making—with

LYNGSEIDET.

To face page 26.

infinite relish. When one bears in mind that in primitive districts amongst the Swiss mountains the autumn baking has to supply bread to last all the winter, bread fresh once a week becomes in one's eyes a luxury. In Norway, however, *fladbrod*, a sort of thin, crisp wafer, is usually eaten instead of ordinary bread, and this the peasants make in their own houses.

When first we arrived at Lyngseidet we were absolutely bewildered by the maze of mountains we had seen on our journey thither, and the map did not help us to disentangle them, for hardly any are marked, and those mostly in the wrong place. Glaciers are entirely ignored, but farmhouses and parish boundaries are writ very large indeed. The latter I at first supposed to be water-sheds, till I found that in some cases they went right across fjords.

The other English party whom we met at Tromsø left the same day as ourselves, and camped for three weeks by the Jaegervand, a large lake near the Ulfsfjord, close to some of the finest mountains of the district.

We settled meanwhile at Lyngseidet and went up several of the peaks from that side, by degrees getting our bearings and becoming familiar with the general lie of the land and the position of the several mountain groups visible from the summits we ascended.

Soon after our arrival, Mr Slingsby sent us word that their party had ascended the Kjostind, a peak conspicuous (as we imagined) from Lyngseidet, and an admirable point of view. We were just starting for this mountain when Mr Slingsby's note arrived, but decided to go for it all the same, as our side of the peak was still untouched, and we wanted to prove that it could be easily done from Lyngseidet. Our hostess was not encouraging. She said that the Kjostind must be very difficult, and (with all due respect for Mr Slingsby) probably impossible. This opinion she based on the fact that a German gentleman, with a peasant from the village, had attemped to reach the summit, and, having failed, declared that the ascent was quite impracticable.

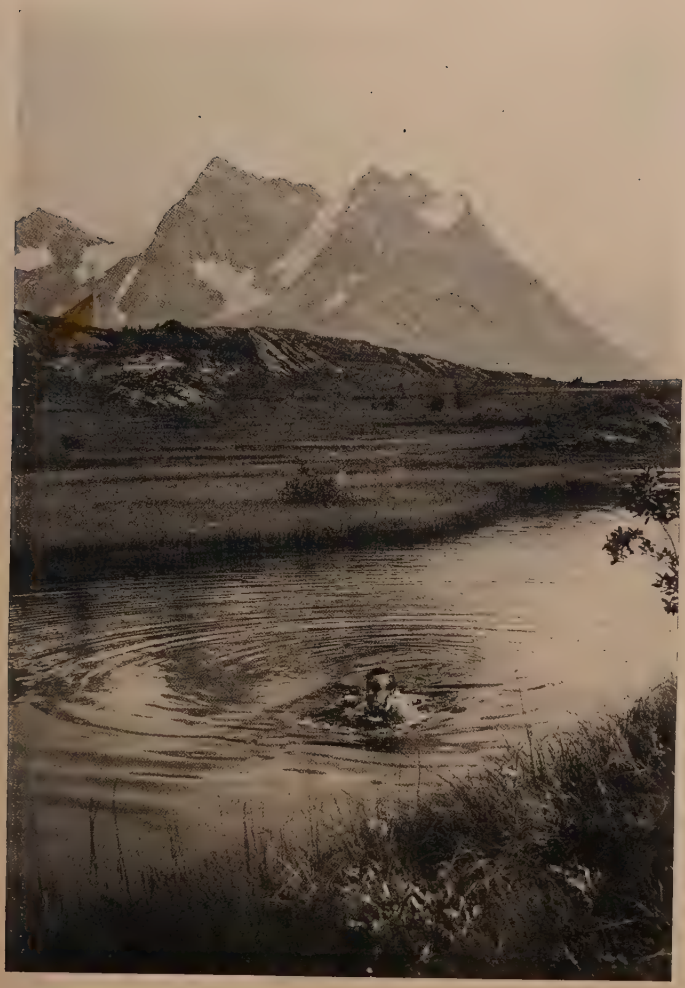
We started, however, and from our entire

ignorance of the whole district, we had a nice business with it! At first all went beautifully. We crossed the glacier — we named it the Gjoever glacier—got on to the rocks, and mounted steadily and rapidly. In about five hours from Lyngseidet, Imboden said: "We are close to the top!" We pressed on, pulled ourselves up a steepish bit of crag, and then——? Well, we were indeed near to the top in point of distance, but very far in point of time, for at our feet was a deep gash in the ridge, and beyond it rose the highest peak which consisted of about as sheer a cliff as I ever want to meet with, and there seemed no means of outflanking it without a much longer *detour* than I cared about on this my first climb that summer. However, our peak, if a little one—fully 200 feet lower than the other—was yet our very own, so we built a stone man, took some photographs, and made the best of our way home.

But if that day—17th July—was not memorable for a successful piece of mountaineering, we were amply repaid for the walk. For

the first time in our lives we met with great herds of reindeer — hundreds of them, browsing, or so it seemed, on the snow. As they stood out against the sky-line, their great horns sharply defined against a beautiful atmospheric effect, they formed a picture I shall not easily forget.

They were huge beasts, far larger than I had expected, and, keen photographer though I am, I hesitated before pressing on towards them, camera in hand. Imboden reassured me, however, declaring that they were as tame as cows; and so I leisurely chose the best standpoint from which to take the picture that appears in this volume. In hot weather —and just then it was very hot indeed—the animals are glad to escape the flies by mounting to the lower snow-fields. One never sees them on the glaciers or at any very great height above the valleys, but on fine days they roam about between the upper limits of the forest and the snow patches that remain unmelted till late in the summer, and when bad weather sets in they descend and take shelter amongst the trees. Often,



THE STREAM NEAR JAEGERVAND.

face page 30.

when mounting through woods, we have seen their tracks, and have noticed the spots where they have slept, indicated by the crushing of the vegetation. They came down sometimes close to our encampment when we were staying by the Jaegervand, and on one occasion a great white reindeer stood but a few yards from my tent door. I crept softly for my camera, but, alas! our servant, Hildur, happened to turn and caught sight of the creature, and with a piercing yell both she and it took to their heels!

However peacefully disposed reindeer may be on ordinary occasions, their size and their great antlers make them alarming in appearance. Once, several years after our first visit to the North, the antics of a reindeer gave me, I must confess, a certain amount of uneasiness. My husband and I were bathing in a wide reach of the little river that runs into the head of the Jaegervand. It was a roastingly hot day, the thermometer standing at 85° in the shade, and we were enjoying the cool water. Presently a reindeer came out of the wood, and began slowly stepping

towards us. I did not fancy the situation, so I scrambled into the boat, and pushing it off made for the opposite shore. But the reindeer came steadily on, and soon he, too, took to the water, and a sensation of being chased began to close in on me. I called out to Aubrey, who hastily joined me, and with a reassuring word held out the gleaming barrel of a revolver. We landed, and hastened to the top of a little hill close by, and a funny sight we must have been, dripping and in bare feet, prepared to meet a hostile advance. I am not sure that I had not seized an ice axe—we usually had a couple in the boat—and I know that my fingers itched to wield a camera. The deer was now just below us, on our side of the river, and, alas! for human vanity, he took not the slightest notice of us. Indeed, I am not at all convinced that he had even thought about us, for an instant later he began to run wildly round and round, after a little time plunging once more into the river, and presently disappearing from our sight into the forest. No doubt the poor beast had been tormented by

THE URTIND AND A CORNER OF THE KJOSENFJORD, FROM THE GJOEVERTIND.

To face page 33.

mosquitoes, but at that time we did not know how liable are these animals to the stings of these pests of Lapland.

I digress, however, from our story of mountaineering, and must go back to the Kjostind. Having once tried it, of course we felt bound to continue to try it till we got up; and as we expected very little difficulty and the way now appeared clear enough, it was evident that we were just in the frame of mind when fate thinks it well to show that there is more in the matter than we had looked for. And indeed the Kjostind seemed fated to give us trouble. It made us literally walk round it before it had done with us. Imboden referred to it as "Jerico," and suggested that if we walked round often enough it might tumble down. I know that a good deal of it did tumble down when we got on to it!

Two days later we went as far as the Kjosen glacier, intending to ascend "Jerico" from that side. But rain and fog fairly beat us, and though that route is undoubtedly the quickest and easiest, we had to descend without gaining the summit.

The next morning was clear and bright, so at 7 A.M. we set out, determined to capture "Jerico" this time whatever happened. For some distance we took the same route as on our first attempt, but having reached the foot of the Gjoever glacier we passed along below it, over turf and snow patches, to the (true) right bank of the Rottenvik glacier. From here our peak was well seen, rising to the left of a snowy saddle. To the right of the saddle was another peak, snow-capped. "I am sure," Imboden remarked, "that fellow with the snow is the one they have been up, and the other is still new."

"But which is the Kjostind?" we asked each other.

Imboden thought it was "Jerico," for that is the peak seen from Lyngseidet, and known there as the Kjostind.

I believed the other to be the Kjostind, because it was the one selected by Mr Slingsby's party. Which was the higher? That we could not say, but perhaps if we ascended both we should see.

"We will do one first, ma'am," said Imboden;

"and then, if we have time, we can go up the other. Both are climbable from this side, and I believe the one to the left is new. On the other I fancy I can see their stone man."

It was rather a long grind up the glacier, which in places was a good deal crevassed. The snow was in what seems its normal condition in Lapland, admirable for walking on, but a trifle rotten on the bridges. We had thus to go carefully, and it was not till 12.30 P.M. that we found ourselves in a snug corner amongst the rocks, above the saddle, and intent upon tea-making. As wine is practically unobtainable in out-of-the-way parts of Norway, and we did not care to drink beer on the mountains, we carried a tea-kettle and made tea when we halted for food. A bottle to carry water from the highest point where it is obtainable is a necessary portion of one's equipment.

Few guides would be ready, as were the Imbodens, to climb for months together on tea alone as a beverage, and with coffee as the staple drink in camp. No doubt the fact that we had our tea hot on the mountains

made it doubly welcome. Cold tea is all very well in warm weather when one is thirsty, but if partaken of at every meal I think one would get very tired of it. In a land where it is always day and halts may be prolonged to any desired extent without inconvenience, it is very pleasant to select a sheltered spot commanding a fine view and picnic there at leisure, while the kettle can take its own time to boil, and as good a cup of tea with cream can be obtained as anywhere in the world. It is seldom in the Alps that one can settle down for a real rest, and perhaps the longest halt I ever had out of Norway was on the Meije, when Maximum Gaspard insisted on our remaining for two hours at the top of the great wall. Why he should have chosen that time and place for a snooze I could never discover, but I had to give in to it at the moment and kick my heels over the precipice until he chose to give the word to advance.

Our tea-making concluded, we packed away our impedimenta in a knapsack, and taking only the camera with us set out towards our goal.

A ridge of loose rocks led from our halting-place to the top, and before long we saw that all was plain sailing before us. The summit itself is a long, stony *plateau*, very like the top of the Romsdalshorn, a peak I heard a lady at Naes refer to with considerable *aplomb* as the "Ramstail's horn."

As we neared the highest point, which is the cliff overhanging the Kjosenfjord, the guides hung back and urged me to step first on to it.

But in the end "Jerico" got the better of us. I always felt that somehow the mountain had an unpleasant surprise hidden away. And so he had, for as we set foot on the topmost rock there lay beneath our eyes a very small, very old, but undoubtedly humanly-constructed stone man!

Who was our predecessor? When was he here? By what route did he ascend? No one knows, but from the look of the stones it must have been many years ago.

We built a large cairn at the edge of the cliff, whence it is visible at Lyngseidet, and then we turned our attention to the other peak. I thought it looked a little higher than

our standpoint. Imboden believed the two peaks to be about the same. We christened ours the Gjoevertind to distinguish it from the other.

Having descended to the saddle, we looked about for the best route up the other peak, the Kjostind. We first thought of ascending by the ridge from the saddle, but eventually decided that a better and quicker way was to cross the glacier, gain the rock ridge beyond, turn sharp to the left at the top, and follow it to the summit of the peak. This plan succeeded admirably, and the first few feet of the rocky wall furnished some very pretty scrambling.

At 3.30 P.M. we reached the first of the series of stone sentinels, which Mr Slingsby's party had placed at intervals all round the wall of rock which supports the snow-cap. It led one to think that after a few hours on a mountain-top the member of the party who wields neither the camera nor the plane-table must be glad of some active employment.

We were singularly favoured by the weather, and sat a long time on the summit, while

Imboden devised safe and speedy routes up the scores of magnificent peaks which surrounded us. Here, a rocky needle reminded us of the Aiguille du Dru. There, a great rock-ribbed mountain, plastered with glacier, seemed another Barre des Ecrins. To the south, the huge snowy mass of the Yoeggevarre resembled Mont Blanc. But another feature was present, never seen in Alpine views. The Lake of Thun looks exquisitely lovely at early morning from the Jungfrau. But no lake can match the heavenly blue of the fjords as they stretch mile after mile, away amidst snow-crowned mountains, away to the distant, island-gemmed Arctic Ocean. Such a view as I saw from the Kjostind my eyes had never rested on before; it alone was worth a longer journey than I had made from England.

It was a beautiful walk over calm, far-stretching uplands back to Lyngseidet that evening, and at 8.30 we were down there once more.

By this time the servant of our kind hosts had got thoroughly into our ways. No

sooner did our little party swing round the corner of the road into sight than the maid dashed off to the kitchen for giant cans of hot water; and though the house did not boast a bathroom, in my bedroom was provided a truly excellent substitute. Lyngseidet, being on the very edge of the sea, is free from mosquitoes, but later on, when in camp, at some distance from a fjord, bath time was not a period of unmixed content. One had to wage an active war not only against mosquitoes, but also against horse-flies of the most virulent and unrelenting nature. That they were drowned by scores deterred them not at all; and, instead of emerging from one's tub refreshed and rested, one concluded the hastiest of dips in breathless rapidity and irritation of body and of spirit. The season of activity in insect life in the far North is a very short one, but, at any rate, few moments are wasted while it lasts.

ON THE ISSKARTIND.

To face page 41.

CHAPTER III

THE ISSKARTIND

In Switzerland the lazy climber (I speak for myself) commences his ascents in a carriage; in Norway, he takes a boat. Very long ago, when Imboden and I were travelling towards Interlaken on a steamer, an English lady of enquiring mind asked my guide where we were going. Sweeping his arm across the landscape, he replied that we proposed ascending the Jungfrau. "What! But not in the boat?" exclaimed my countrywoman.

It is true that in boats on lakes and fjords it is impossible to improve one's level. Still, a great saving in fatigue is often effected, so that as the fjords of Norway correspond to the valleys of Switzerland, so does the native *Baad* answer to the digestion-promoting *Einspanner*.

It was a lovely evening—25th July—when at ten o'clock we set off to cross the narrow strip of land between Lyngseidet and the Kjosenfjord. A boat awaited us on the latter; and for about an hour and a half we paddled quietly along the oily surface of the water, towards the entrance to the Tytteboerdal. The light summer nights of Norway are extremely convenient for climbing in more ways than at first occur to the mind. If the weather has been bad, but seems to be improving, one can set out at any hour with no fear of being benighted. During a lengthy expedition, halts can be made long enough to afford real rest.

The rosy glow of a blended sunset and sunrise on peak and glacier are very beautiful, but, to my mind, cannot vie with the matchless splendour of a clear night on the Alps. For though a night in summer, 200 miles north of the Arctic Circle, has its own charm, the pre-eminent charm of variety is lacking. In the Alps we have the glory and radiance of the sunlight at noonday, we have the deep valleys lost in purple shadows, and the dark

THE SÖRFJORD AND KJOSENFJORD, FROM THE ISSKARTIND.

woods that climb far up the hill-sides and afford so delightful an atmosphere of warm, sweet-smelling pine and delicious shade as we drop down through them on our homeward way. And then we have the nights, when we throw open the door of the stuffy, smoky hut and disclose the majestic calmness and purity of moonlight streaming over the glistening snow-fields.

For sheer soul-stirring, natural beauty, I know nothing to compare with scenes I have looked upon in the small hours of the morning above the snow-line. One in particular stands out in my mind, when we stepped out at 2 A.M. or so upon the upper slopes of the great glacier that rolls down from the Mönchjoch. Such a vision is beyond all words to adequately describe; one can but try and bring it back as a mental picture, and, having done so, admit that the exquisite nights of northern Norway are less captivating than those on Alpine peaks.

The Tytteboerdal is a long, uninteresting valley, the lower portion of which is clothed with the usual silver birch and seamed with

numerous small paths, none of which were sufficiently well defined to prevent us being tempted to better ourselves in others. The mosquitoes were untiring in their attacks, but in my case their stings had little virulence, and did not subsequently swell and irritate me as do mosquito stings in the south of Europe. Should Norwegian climbing ever have a literature of its own, I fancy that the mosquito will take the place in it appropriated in works of Alpine travel to the flea, and with this advantage, that a mosquito is an insect which it is perfectly proper to talk about.

When near the head of the valley we thought to shorten our way by striking up to our left across stones to a little saddle overlooking a half-frozen lake and in full view of our peak. Very far away it looked across the hollow and beyond the glacier which descends from the base of the *cirque* of which the Isskartind forms part. Formidably steep it was too, and streaked with great snow *couloirs*, seamed here and there by falling stones, so the mountain appeared as if it might not be an unmixed joy to go up. We sat down, got

out the Zeiss glasses and saw something much worse than steep *couloirs* and precipitous rocks, and this took the shape of a big cairn on the topmost point.

"Never mind!" said I. "It is a peak worth doing, even if we are the second party up it."

"We shall, at any rate, ascend by a new route," remarked Imboden.

"Which ridge do you propose trying?" I enquired, for I know that if it is a choice between a snow *couloir* and a rock ridge, we nearly always take the latter.

"The one to our right," Imboden replied; "and I shall try and follow it to the top."

I must here explain that from where we stood this ridge looked as if it was one of the great main ridges of the mountain. In reality, it was not very pronounced, the chief ridge on that side rising direct from the snowy pass between the highest peak of the Isskartinder and the eastern peak. The latter is very easy, and was ascended some years ago for the survey of this district, on which the map now in preparation will be based.

We traversed snow-slopes from our little

pass, mounted stones beyond, and were soon on the great *plateau* of the Isskar glacier. It was now about 5.30 A.M., and the heat was very great. I liked the look of the ridge as we approached it. It led straight to the summit, and though the upper part seemed extremely steep, it was obviously possible to skirt it on the snow. To make a long story short, we picked our way up broken rocks with little trouble till we reached the foot of the final tower which forms the actual summit of the mountain. To our right, smooth and vertical cliffs barred the way. To our left, the rock was more split up, and after wriggling to the top of a chimney or two, and hoisting ourselves up some slabs, we commenced a traverse, and having gone some distance doubled back at a higher level and regained the ridge. From here the few steps which remained were disclosed, and proved to be quite easy, and at 7.30 A.M. we stepped on to the top and had the world for miles around at our feet.

If the view from the Kjostind was the loveliest of its kind I had ever seen, I must admit that it was excelled by that from the

ON THE ISSKARTIND.

To face page 46.

Isskartind. Straight below us lay the tranquil blue waters of the Jaegervand. The sea beyond, studded with islands, shimmered in the brilliant light of a perfect summer's day. Beyond the Kjosenfjord, spotless robes of snow covered the mountains. Glaciers with green rifts in their waves of ice swept majestically between the peaks, which stood like minster spires to the north. Tiny lakes looked up at us with wide-open sapphire eyes from every little hollow. Clouds drifted lazily here and there, casting deep purple shadows on the hill-sides. Not a sound fell on the ear. We seemed detached from the earth.

It was difficult to rouse oneself and give the order to move, and I felt as if shaking myself free from a dream when I broke the silence, but go eventually we had to.

The last few minutes were given up to planning future ascents. We could see by their stone men that several small peaks close by and two or three high ones further off had been ascended. But any number of magnificent mountains still remained unclimbed, and we marvelled at their grandeur and extent.

We had one of the very hottest walks I ever remember down the mountain. It was hard to believe oneself within the Arctic Circle. Shoulder-deep in beautiful ferns, who would imagine that we were further north than the latitude at which Franklin perished in the Arctic regions of America! Truly, Norway owes her whole life to the Gulf Stream!

While walking on the hill-sides and along the valleys, one is struck by the absence of animal and bird life. Reindeer and a few sheep are met with, and now and then ptarmigan above the tree-line and rype in the woods, but except by the fjords we saw hardly any birds. There, however, wild-duck of various kinds, including, of course, the eider-duck, are found in abundance; and after every big haul of fish, hundreds of gulls fill the air with their shrill cries, and make it look as if laden with snowflakes. But in the north the birds are not the only interesting visitors. Numerous Lapps, in their picturesque dress, take up their summer quarters in the neighbourhood, and with their quaint

ways, their rolling gait, and their horror of the photographer, are always entertaining to watch. They believe that the evil eye is contained in a camera, and the moment it is turned towards them they vanish! I had great difficulty in obtaining any good photographs of Lapps for this reason, and had to resort to various stratagems. They migrate to Sweden with their reindeer in the winter. The animals are said to do considerable damage to the woods and cultivated land during their temporary sojourn. The residents have thus no friendly feeling towards the reindeer, and in very out-of-the-way districts we were often amused by the natives pointing out to Imboden the reindeer's haunts, and urging him to have a shot at them.

CHAPTER IV

FOUR NEW ASCENTS FROM LYNGSEIDET

Our next ascent, or rather brace of ascents, for we managed to get up a couple of peaks on the same day, was begun under rather depressing conditions. Encouraged by a few blue patches in the sky, we set out at 3.30 P.M. from Lyngseidet, rowed to the Tytteboerdal, and had walked barely a couple of hours when rain began. We found an inconvenient boulder which we agreed to speak of as a shelter, and flattening ourselves against its side we had a meal which may have been supper or breakfast, whichever one chose to consider it. Fortune favoured us, for, with the consumption of our last cup of hot tea, the rain abated, and in a gentle drizzle and a thick fog we continued our way.

We had seen something of our goal—the

Sofietind—during our ascent of the Isskartind, but not as much as we could have wished. Selecting the north *arête* we began to go up it. Half an hour passed and we appeared to be making grand progress, not that we could see much by reason of the fog, but the pace was rapid. Then we came to a very steep bit indeed, and Imboden's prophetic mind considered that there was worse above. He untied himself and went on to look, while Emil and I remained clinging to various little ledges on the face of a precipice which began and ended in a seething mist. It was not a very cheerful position, especially about midnight, for though at midnight in the north of Norway in summer it is daylight, the light has not the power and cheering warmth of midday. After a little time Imboden returned and announced: "We have simply to go down again!" He was much annoyed, and said that we were near the top of a *gendarme*, or needle of rock on the ridge, and that it could not be descended on the other side, where, anyhow, the face of the mountain itself was quite sheer. So down we went, got on

to the little glacier, traversed under the Sofietind, and made for the east ridge. This "went" well enough, but required the usual tactics necessary on most of these peaks, where an *arête* can hardly ever be entirely kept to. Most of these mountains, while consisting of perhaps four main *arêtes*, possess innumerable minor ones, each separated from the other by a *couloir*. In fact it is scarcely an exaggeration to say that people on a long rope, fearing each other's stones, can each have his own *arête* or his own *couloir*. And here I may incidentally remark that as these peaks are rotten to a degree unknown in the Alps, a party climbing them should be small. I would not myself care to be one of more than three on a rope, and Imboden more than once said he would refuse to climb in the north, now that he knows the mountains, with more than two other persons besides himself.

It is a great advantage in climbing of this sort for every member of the party to be thoroughly familiar with the tactics of every one else. Danger is only avoided in such

THE SOFIETIND FROM THE BASE OF THE ISSKARTIND.

To face page 53.

places by constant vigilance, and some of the easiest-looking passages offer the greatest risks. Therefore, if the leader is seen to be advancing but slowly over rocks that appear quite simple, one should realise that he has a good reason for the deliberation of his movements, and when one's own turn comes it is well to be extra careful in handling the rocks one is climbing. It is impossible to keep up a constant fire of "Don't touch that one!" "Don't step on this one!" "The black one will come away if you so much as look at it!" "The red one is all right!" and so on. The great safeguard is unswerving attention to detail and an eye on that most persistent of stone disturbers, the rope. Indeed, the rope on mountains such as these is a real trial. Imboden would seldom consent to leave it off, and by the time our climbing in those regions came to an end I flattered myself I had some knowledge and experience of how to use it on places where it was liable to catch about every half minute.

We traversed, went up chimneys, traversed back again, ascended a *couloir* for a little and

finally struck the actual crest or backbone of the mountain. This we were able to follow over firm rock. We felt that we must be near the top, but it was still veiled in mist. At last something began to loom out of the fog above us. Was it the summit, and was it—oh! was it a stone man calmly standing there waiting for us? We felt but too sure that it was, and rather limply we pressed on. But as the distance decreased doubts arose, then as the first man got still closer the doubts resolved themselves into joyful certainty. No! there was no cairn, "only a simpleton of a stone trying to make fools of us!" said Imboden, as we gathered together on the tiny summit, our first good "First Ascent" in Lapland.

The persistence of the fog was very annoying. We had hoped to pass along the *arête* connecting the Sofietind with the Sultind, but to embark on a descent over new ground of which we had seen nothing would have been folly. So, after Emil had accomplished the task which invariably fell to him — that of building stone men on new peaks as a record of our ascents — we began to go down at

2.30 A.M. by the same route. As we descended the fog cleared off, and we had a grand view of the magnificent Isskar glacier. This glacier is well seen from the Ulfsfjord, and it has thus been allotted a name, the Isskar, or ice-pass, from the apparent saddle at its head, in reality a snowy *plateau*.

As the weather continued to clear we turned our attention after breakfast to the Sultind —an easy peak, but worth ascending because it immediately overlooks the Kjosenfjord and commands a charming view, because it was unclimbed, because we were not far from it, and because we had ordered our boat at twelve and had to fill up the time till then. Its ascent was without incident, and by 1.30 P.M. we were back at Lyngseidet. Thus ended our mountaineering for the month of July.

August 1st was a truly pictorial day. Masses of mist floated in the valleys and occasionally enveloped the mountain-tops. A deep-blue sky spread over all, and a hot sun lit up the spires of rock and made the snow brilliantly white and glistening. We had made a start

from Lyngseidet at 9.15 P.M., bound for the Urtind, a conspicuous rocky peak which looks well from everywhere in the neighbourhood. We ascended the slopes above the Kjosenfjord for a long distance diagonally, till we struck the beginning of a broad shelf which sloped back again across the mountain. Following this till immediately below the summit, we went straight up a useful ridge, over a snow patch, and, without requiring to put on the rope, reached the top at 2.45 A.M. There was no sign of a previous ascent. While Emil carried out building operations, Imboden and I decided that our next move should be an attempt to follow the long ridge which connects the Urtind with the Tytteboertind, another new peak, and one which looks very well from Lyngseidet.

Tying ourselves together, we set off about 3.45 A.M., and had a very pleasant scramble along the ridge. In more than one place we had to descend a little and traverse on the face to our right, to avoid precipitous drops on the *arête*. About midway along the ridge a curious seam of what I imagine is yellow

sandstone occurs, and the surface of this is very smooth. A scratch on it is easily made, and is as conspicuous as the mark of a pencil on a slate.

About this point we had the great good fortune to observe a magnificent specimen of a circular rainbow. I had seen one previously on the Finsteraarhorn, but Imboden had never before met with one, and this will give an idea of their great rarity. The circle on this occasion was of the utmost brilliance, and sometimes an outer one of fainter colours was visible. In the centre each of us saw his own shadow. This splendid phenomenon was frequently before us till, at 6.30 A.M., we got to the top of the Tytteboertind, when it shone out with extraordinary splendour, arched over at some distance by a great fog bow. Those interested in the subject will find letters referring to circular rainbows in *The Alpine Journal*, vols. xi., xii. and xv., pp. 482, 172, 271, and 329 respectively. In Whymper's "Ascent of the Matterhorn" there is an illustration and diagrams of a fog bow, and an explanation of the reason for their appearance.

But to return to our climb. The *arête*

continued to be pleasant and interesting till near the final spring of the Tytteboertind. Then, as there was a bit we were not quite sure of, we traversed again to our right and completed the ascent by another ridge. We saw afterwards that had we kept straight on, we should have got up all the same.

We spent some time on the top, resting and eating and building. The mist always hung persistently over the side of the peak we wished to descend, so we had finally to move off without a clear view. I gave my opinion as to the identity of a certain *arête.* Imboden positively asserted that the one we had seen previously from below was another. I was so used to being in the wrong whenever I differed from Imboden, that I started off quite contentedly down his ridge, well satisfied that it was not necessary to take mine, which was much steeper and harder. However, after descending about 300 feet Imboden declared he was puzzled, and having explored a little the order was given to traverse sundry *couloirs* till we gained my ridge, if gain it we could from there. This necessitated some

rather awkward work, especially a few steps across a precipitous face where everything one touched came away in one's hands. But at last we topped the *arête*, and from here, with the exception of several doubts as to possible "drops," all went well. The length of that ridge was preposterous. It seemed to stretch for miles ahead, and what with the inordinate distance and the fact that it was so rotten that close attention to hands and feet was unceasingly needed, we were mightily glad when a mossy knoll was reached when the rope could be removed and a pleasanter surface obtained for walking. Having had no very definite plans on starting, we did not order a boat to meet us, so when we reached the border of the fjord at the mouth of the Tytteboerdal, a long tramp home of two hours or more still awaited us. As this led all the time beneath the *arête* we had passed along, the view of the latter interested us, and afforded some help in passing the time.

That evening, after my return to Lyngseidet, I visited the school, a large and lofty upper room attached to Herre Gjoever's house. The

school is only open for three months—May, June and July; and as this was 1st August an exhibition of the work done by the girls during the past term was being held. Some of the embroidery on linen was admirably turned out, and pretty things in silks and other delicate fabrics showed singularly little trace of handling.

Norwegian girls get through an enormous amount of needlework during the long, dark hours of winter. The interiors of their houses bear visible witness to their industry, and wherever it is possible to utilise embroidery and various kinds of hand-made fabrics, there we see them displayed to view. Table-covers and chair-backs are, of course, all made by hand, and the panelled walls are often hung with the most cherished specimens of their skill. But, according to our English ideas, it is the house linen that best repays their labour. The sheets have often beautifully embroidered borders, and even in the simplest little farm-house the linen is a pleasure to look at.

In spite of the short period during which in the country Norwegian children attend

school, the standard of education is high. No doubt in a land where life and property are safer than in any other part of the world, it is possible for the population to retain a tranquillity of mind most favourable to the acquirement of knowledge; and during their long sunless time of year — for a couple of months in the part of Norway familiar to us the sun is never above the horizon—there is plenty of time for reading.

We were often surprised, when talking to Norwegians in a humble station, to find how easily they met us on ground familiar to both. We noticed this specially when, during our three last seasons in the North, we had a servant. At that time our object was rather an outdoor life, with shooting and fishing, than mountaineering alone, and it was a great comfort to us to find on our return to camp that food was ready for us, and everything in order. Our maid, Hildur, was a person of surprising versatility. She came from Bødø, just on the verge of the Arctic Circle, and we heard of her through the servant of a fishing party with whom we travelled down the coast.

Hildur, with the enterprise of her country-folk, was quite ready to embark on a rough life in camp with people she had never seen. I believe she came at first from sheer curiosity, for her father was well-to-do, and she expressed herself as amply satisfied with the very moderate wages she asked. She spoke not one word of English, but she had supplied herself with a Norwegian-English dictionary, and so ready was she in jumping to correct conclusions, that in quite a short time she had taught herself a fair amount of our language, and had imparted to us a goodly number of words and phrases of her own. When first she joined us on the boat at Bødø our hearts sank. She was short and slight and looked far from strong, and her little neatly-gloved hands seemed hardly capable of helping to pull up boats, erect tents, and be a real helpmeet to us. But she turned out all that we could wish. Nothing came amiss to her. She was a first-rate cook, an excellent needlewoman, resourceful, cheerful, untiring. I happened to have a set of photographs by me, and many were of ancient remains at

Rome and elsewhere. Hildur viewed them with the greatest interest, and her comments would not have discredited many a young woman at home in a very different walk of life.

The women of Norway struck me, on the whole, as singularly independent and capable. They do not shirk physical toil, but give one the impression that they undertake it because they like it, and not, as in Eastern countries, because their menkind drive them to it. Those who have leisure often spend it in summer in making long walking tours through the mountainous regions of their beautiful country. There are no gay sea-side places, such as those of which England and France possess so many, and holiday-makers turn to the hills rather than, as with us, to the sea; no doubt because, in many cases, they live near it. The mountain districts of the better-known parts of Norway are amply provided with unassuming guest-houses, on much the same lines as the little climbers' inns of the Austrian Alpine Club. They are intended for persons remaining only

a night or two, and are largely patronised by parties of girls in twos and threes, who, carrying all they require in knapsacks on their backs, tramp gaily, with the aid of a map, over the footpaths that take them across the bleak and wild passes high above the tree-line.

The safety of property is truly remarkable, and, as elsewhere, the more primitive the district, the more honest are its inhabitants. In fact, except through the grossest carelessness on one's own part, it is impossible to lose anything. Honesty seems to be ingrained in the people, who offer thus a splendid example of respect for the rights of their neighbours.

The peaceful little scene at that quiet school-house was soon to be disturbed. Little as we suspected it, our first adventure was at hand, but what it was, and how we came through it, I must reserve for the next chapter.

HERRE JOEVER'S HOUSE AT LYNGSEIDET.

AN HOUR AFTER THE FIRE BROKE OUT.

To face page 65.

CHAPTER V

A COMMON EXPERIENCE IN NORWAY

We had heard much of the beauties of the Jaegervand, or "hunter's lake," and had seen enough of it from the Isskartind, and of the grand mountains not far from it, to make us decide to camp there before long. Wednesday, 3rd August, was the day fixed for our start, for every Wednesday the steamer from Kjosen touches at the tiny village of Jaegervand. So we spent much of the previous day which followed my visit to the school, packing, and had all the heavier things ready in a large shed by the landing-stage, and the remainder and our personal belongings stowed away and piled up in our boxes in the corridor of Herre Gjoever's house, ready to bring downstairs next morning. I have rather a mania for having things prepared overnight, so, except

a few toilet accessories and such trifles, there was nothing left on Tuesday evening to put away.

At 3.30 A.M. on the 3rd I awoke, and, hearing steps in the house, began, not for the first time, to wish that people in the north of Norway went to bed in summer at rational hours. The summer nights are so beautiful that it is very natural that many people prefer to turn night into day; and sometimes, looking out of my window about 2 A.M., I have seen croquet proceeding below, while descending about ten o'clock for breakfast I have had to wait till it pleased a member of the household to rise from bed and get it ready.

The sounds that annoyed me increased, and in a wooden house every sound is magnified many times. Presently a door banged, then another. I felt inclined to call a word or two of reproach down the stairs.

But an instant later some one ascended with hurrying feet, dashed down the passage, flung open my door, and to my amazed eyesight was revealed Frocken Gjoever, with horror depicted on her face.

"Fire! Fire!" she cried. "Out! Out!" and disappeared as rapidly as she came.

Now by a certain law every room in every hotel in Norway, if built of wood, must contain a fire-escape. The usual kind is a simple contrivance of rope, with a slip of board to form a seat. Printed directions hang beside it, instructing the user how to seize hold of the proper cord "in order to regulate the hurry." I should have imagined that the "hurry" was positively the last thing he would desire to regulate! So far as our quarters were concerned, they were not a hotel, and they possessed no fire-escapes, so all the hurry had to be produced by our unaided activity.

The building was old and entirely of wood. To add to its inflammability, the roof was lined with birch bark that positively reeked of turpentine, and everything, after a spell of fine weather, was as dry as a bone.

Leaping from my bed, I made all the haste I could. First I warned the guides, whose room was immediately opposite mine. Emil, who put out his head in reply, was calm and smiling. I asked him afterwards what had

amused him, and he replied that they had been roused a minute or two before, and his father, still half asleep, had made such haste to dress that he had wasted quite a long time trying to put his leg through the arm of his coat!

Dashing back to my room I seized a kit-bag containing money in one hand, and a small trunk which had in it all my exposed photographic plates in the other, and precipitated myself with them down the stairs, through the garden and to a safe distance from the house. The guides appeared directly after, laden with all they could carry; and by that time we had discovered that the fire had broken out under the school-room, and that we could venture back into the house and secure the rest of our things. We had but little time, however, as within eight minutes of the first alarm the flames were coming up under Emil's bed. We saved practically everything of our own, and the guides were able to help with other people's property; but in less than an hour the house, outhouses, and adjoining shop were a heap of ashes.

The feature of the whole occurrence, to my mind, was the remarkable silence which prevailed. All the men in the place were doing what they could to save property and to cover adjacent buildings with wet sails, but no one called out nor hustled any one else. I can safely say that as to management nothing could have been worse. There was no hose, and for a long time there were no buckets, yet there is a stream close to where the house stood. I believe nothing could have stopped the burning of the house and shop, but had promptness been shown everything could have been saved out of the latter. The weather was calm and fine. Had a strong wind prevailed, the whole village would probably have been burnt. The property was well insured.

The fire originated through an over-heated stove, due to the carelessness of a half-witted old man who did odd jobs about the place. As soon as the fire had burnt itself out, neighbours kindly asked us to breakfast, and Fru Solem took us to her charming house overlooking the fjord and regaled us with many excellent things, for which I here heartily thank her.

Then we retired to where our luggage was heaped up in a field, and awaited the getting ready of a cart to take it to Kjosen. Here we embarked on the steamer, where a courteous official reopened the mail-bag to take out my letters addressed to Lyngseidet. I have since been more than once indebted to him for a similar service, and I hereby assure him that I do not forget it.

At Kjovik came on board Messrs Hastings and Haskett-Smith, and gave us much information as to mountains. They had just descended with Mr Slingsby from a first ascent of the Fornoestind, a peak which Herre Gjoever had assured them the previous year could not be climbed. So certain was he that this was the case that he backed his opinion with three bottles of champagne, a bet Mr Hastings promptly took. When the party were seen on the top, a telegram was despatched by Herre Gjoever's relations below to him to Bergen. It ran something like this: "Now sits the stone man upon the top of Fornoestind. Where is the champagne?" "In the cellar—take it," was the reply, for

THE FORNOESTIND, FROM THE TYTTEBOERTIND.

To face page 70.

poor Herre Gjoever little knew that his cellar would soon have a blazing house over it.

The steamer goes nearly to the head of the fjord before calling at Jaegervand, so it was 8 P.M. when we reached that place. It was raining, and we did not care to transport everything in the wet across the strip of land separating the fjord from the lake. Further, we were told by our captain—a jolly person who swore fearfully at the very mention of mountains, which were things he heartily detested — that there were two houses at Jaegervand where travellers were received. One of these, it was said, was full. "At the other," he remarked, "you can have rooms."

We left all our things except what we needed for the night piled up under a huge mackintosh cover on the beach, and were then conducted to one of the six houses comprising the village of Jaegervand. Here we were hospitably received by an elderly person with whom in our very elementary Norsk we vainly tried to converse. He offered us delicious milk. Then we sat, and sat, and sat, and longed to be shown our rooms. Finally the old gentle-

man got up, brought in our things, and signed to us that we were to stop where we were. The room, in addition to himself, contained a baby asleep in a cradle, a very hot stove, and the frames of two wooden bedsteads! We thanked him warmly, wished him good-night, shook hands with him, and retired to the beach. It did not take long to erect a couple of tents there and unpack our bedding, and, wondering why on earth we had not thought of doing so in the first instance, we soon were sleeping soundly after a day of unusual excitement.

Breakfast was rather a problem next morning. We had packed with the idea of undoing everything at the same time, so the spirit-lamp and kettle were in one place, the tea in another, the bread stored away in a large deal case, the sugar at the bottom of a hamper. But all such difficulties are purely of the imagination. Practically, five minutes' extra time unravels them. So before long we were having our meal, and wondering how we could explain to the not very bright natives that we wished to hire a boat to keep at our camp,

OUR BAGGAGE IS TRANSPORTED ACROSS THE NARROW STRIP OF LAND BETWEEN THE FJORD AND THE LAKE.

To face page 73.

that we should require fish and milk every two days, and, above all, that we would be most grateful for the use of the little uninhabited haymaker's hut at the spot where we proposed camping.

While moodily turning all this over in our minds, a ray of light came on the scene in the person of our excellent Norwegian friend, Herre Casparis. We had no idea he was at Jaegervand, so were greatly surprised to see him, but he had heard of our arrival, and came to call on us before starting that morning on an excursion. He most kindly arranged all our business for us. We were to have a boat for 2 krone[1] a week, fish at 40 öre a kilo, milk at 10 öre a litre; and there would be a charge of 1 krone for the man each time he brought the things, the distance to our camp being about an hour by boat. I may mention that the fish was salmon trout, the best of its kind, caught freshly for us in a net at the end of the lake, just above the point where the river leaves it.

The rest of the day was given up to moving

[1] 18 krone = £1. 100 öre = 1 krone.

our things, setting up the tents and unpacking. The situation of the hut was charming. It was about 200 feet from and 50 feet above the lake, and was backed by a grand group of mountains. It was a real comfort, for in it we cooked, dined and sat. It had an excellent stove with three holes and an airy lean-to shed, suitable for keeping food in. Above our dining-room was a loft, and a few paces from the house was a roofed-over structure with open sides, intended for storing hay, but admirably adapted for drying clothes. The ground all round was covered with the purple berries so familiar to travellers in the mountain districts of Switzerland. Herds of reindeer grazed on the slopes and sometimes walked past our camp.

Altogether the spot was an ideal one, and I do not wonder that in spite of very bad weather a month there passed all too quickly.

INTERIOR OF MY TENT.

To face page 75.

CHAPTER VI

STORTIND CAMP

THE day after our arrival at our camp by the Jaegervand, the weather was rather foggy and doubtful. But we wanted to explore a little, though we did not dare to hope that the conditions would allow us to get up a mountain; so at 11.15 A.M. on 5th August we set out in the direction of the Stortind, a peak ascended for the first time a few weeks previously by Messrs Slingsby, Hastings and Haskett-Smith, and pronounced by them to be difficult.

We rapidly rose, and went straight up towards the highest point, thinking this might be a quicker route than that of the other party who took the *arête*. But when fairly high up, in fact nearly level with the lower peak, we found that it would not safely

"go" any further, and Imboden suggested a return to camp. I was unwilling to descend before seeing something more, so I proposed that we should traverse the face of the mountain and get on to the other ridge, which ought to command an extensive view. Imboden agreed to try, and we got across without difficulty, and at length found ourselves overlooking a fine glacier with some striking peaks beyond it. The weather had improved by this time, and to my surprise and delight Imboden said we might continue upwards, and perhaps even go to the top. So we left the knapsacks, put chocolate in our pockets, and began to mount the *arête*.

In a very few minutes we came to the base of a steep cliff. This, we decided, was the place we had heard of. We could have descended to our left, and by a short and apparently easy traverse have avoided it. But it was a perfectly practicable place, and the rock was firm and sound, so Imboden, standing on his son's shoulders, preferred to negotiate it. I may add that perhaps the mark of boot nails which had scraped the

rock at this spot counted for something in the attempt to do likewise.

We got up, with some puffing and blowing and wriggling, and from there the first summit was reached without difficulty. The second and higher peak is separated from the lower one by a rather deep drop, approached by steep but mostly sound rocks. The last bit of rock cannot be passed over, and must be skirted to the left on the snow. A fairly steep snow slope must be crossed to the base of the final peak, but once here all is plain sailing. We reached the top at 5.45 P.M., six and a half hours after quitting our camp. About one hour was lost by our attempt to go straight up the face. The descent as far as the knapsacks was made by precisely the same route, the *mauvais pas* being easier to go down than up. From this point we went nearly straight down towards our camp, which we regained a little before midnight.

Our early expeditions from Jaegervand had one peculiar feature — we seldom knew for which peak we were setting out. We were vaguely aware that in a certain direction

were peaks, and that after getting a closer view of them we should be able to settle which to ascend.

That most of the peaks and glaciers had no names added to our difficulties. We got tired of referring to them as "the pointed rock behind the big snow-capped one," or "the glacier in the first valley you come to if you bear north from camp," so by degrees names were evolved for them. Before, however, finally deciding that they should bear them to all eternity, I discussed them at home with Mr Cecil Slingsby, whose previous visit to the district and knowledge of the language of the country enabled him to correct or confirm the designations I suggested.

With a view of selecting whatever we were most likely to get up under the far from perfect conditions that prevailed, we turned our steps on 7th August towards the Trold glacier. The walk thither was, for the most part, a particularly pleasant one. What might almost be described as a track, due no doubt to reindeer, sloped diagonally through scanty birch woods and then over short, crisp turf

towards the glacier, giving us charming views across the lake below and glimpses of distant mountain groups across intervening fjords.

The usual troublesome grind over a wilderness of loose stones intervened, however, before we stepped on to the more inviting surface of the ice, and as we at length raised our heads from the continuous and monotonous contemplation of the least unstable foothold submitted to our choice, we noticed that the occasional patches of blue in the sky which had raised our hopes were no longer visible, and a veil of mist was winding itself round the peaks at the head of the glacier.

It was evident that a storm would soon break over us, and, indeed, this it soon proceeded to do. We looked about for shelter, and presently descried a tall cliff, leaning over at a suitable angle, under which we crouched. We became very familiar before the summer was over with every variety of shelter the neighbouring glaciers could offer, for, whereas in the Alps one shelters in bad

weather preparatory to going down, in Arctic Norway one keeps sheltering very often the whole way up!

There is little doubt that at first one overrates the gravity of bad weather in the North. In Switzerland, if a storm threatens while one is engaged on a first-class ascent, one must never attempt "to ride it out." There is but one proper way to deal with it, and that is to go home. But with perpetual daylight and the far milder air from the sea that envelops even the summits of the mountains, other tactics may be adopted, and thus it was that we lunched, and waited, and discussed our plans and continued to hope against hope.

At last Imboden's patience came to an end. He was for going home as soon as the rain ceased. I believed the weather would clear, and urged our continuing as far as the snow basin, whence I could photograph and from where we should be able to study the neighbouring peaks a little more closely. To this course there could be no objection, so, after about an hour's wait, we continued our way, the sun now shining

brightly on the rocky sides of the mountains, which were sprinkled with fresh snow.

When we got to the *plateau*, nothing was said about halting there, and we immediately steered towards a conspicuous gap between the highest peak of the Jaegervandtinder and the fine-looking northern summit, which, seen from here, is not unlike the Schreckhorn as seen from the Lower Grindelwald glacier. The north peak would "go" from the saddle, Imboden thought, so, as the weather still held up, he decided to try it.

It was about this time that our interest was first aroused in a bold, inaccessible-looking rock, called the Trold or "witch." It forms one of the three peaks which overlook the Trold glacier, and it was our great wish, directly we saw it, to go up it. The other party had left it alone, and we rather feared it was a peak which could not be scaled without artificial aid. By this I mean that it might require the fixing of iron spikes and ropes to its smooth head, before a climber could gain the summit. In that case, we should not trouble to climb it, but there was just one side where the rock did not over-

hang, and where a little fresh snow had lodged, and there we decided some day to make an attempt. As far as the uppermost rocks, all was evidently easy enough, but at that point the problem would begin.

That day, however, we were bound for the north Jaegervandtind, and made good progress up the *couloir*—half snow, half rock—towards the gap. Another, but a lesser storm assailed us when half way up, but luckily we found excellent shelter just where we needed it.

We knew that the question whether the peak was "to be, or not to be" ours would probably receive a reply when we reached the saddle, so the last few minutes were spent in rapidly-increasing excitement. As Imboden lifted his head over the gap he cried, "Oh ho!" and following him closely I saw a fine glacier spread out on the other side, which rose to our pass and skirted the rocky walls of the ridge by which we intended continuing the climb. Nothing could have been better, and with hardly a pause we pressed on.

Several promising-looking stony humps which tried to look like the top, gave place one after another to similar ones. At last we reached a

point on the *arête* where a steep and rotten bit of rock had to be surmounted. It is true that by a considerable *détour* to our right we could have outflanked it, I believe, but the weather was threatening and we had no time to lose. Imboden tried to hoist himself up, but whatever he took hold of came bodily out of its socket. Then Emil, being lighter, begged to have a try. His father allowed him to go ahead, holding him up first with his hands and then with his axe. The boy wriggled somehow into a capacious cleft near the top, and then, the rope being up, I had to advance. I confess I received a good deal of help, and in such places I am grateful for even more assistance than I actually require. As long as any one remains below, I think it is the duty of those who are climbing above to use every means not to allow stones to fall, and if it is a choice between touching unsafe rocks which possibly one may bring down, or being hauled up without disturbing them, the latter course is the proper one to adopt. Of course, the first man must cause some risk to those below. But he usually takes

plenty of time, and is probably the most skilful member of the party. In any case, the risk to the third man need not be doubled by a display of false pride on the part of his immediate predecessor.

This bit of gymnastics was our last difficulty, and at 6 P.M. we gained the topmost crag, a boulder firmly wedged into the ridge. A tiny top it was, with barely room for three persons to stand together. Clouds were swirling up on most sides, though to the north a stretch of heavenly blue revealed the Arctic Ocean. Soon this too was blotted out, and we concentrated all our attention on the contents of our knapsacks.

Dinner finished, Imboden, like the skilled leader he is, revealed his plan for the descent.

"Yesterday, while I was out shooting," he began, "I noticed a ridge which sticks out from the south face of this peak. Between it and the mountain is a snow *couloir* which goes straight down to the glacier. By the ridge or by the *couloir* we shall reach the foot of the peak."

THE SKRAEKTIND, FROM THE STORTIND.

To face page 84.

So we moved off down the *arête* for a few yards, and then turned to our right for a rope's length along the other ridge. Here Imboden halted a moment and then pronounced for a direct descent by the *couloir*. We therefore got into it at once, and for some distance made good progress on the stones between the snow and the cliffs. Then they ended, and we crossed the *couloir* to practicable rocks on the other side. About this point a hail-storm commenced, and in a few minutes the rocks were streaming with half-melted icy balls which formed before long a veritable waterfall down the whole mountain. Still we did not get on badly, for the work, if slippery, was not unduly hard, and now and then some admirable snow enabled us to go straight down the middle of the *couloir*. This forks about half way from the top, and in the thick fog we could not see which branch was the better one to choose. Imboden thought that the one to our left was the easier and more direct, but he selected the other as being safer from falling stones.

One more problem awaited us, and towards

it we were now speeding. Was our branch of the *couloir* cut off by impracticable rocks from the glacier below or not? As we neared the bottom, the ground grew steeper, and finally curved over so that the next object which met our eyes was the snow-field. Here, then, was the critical moment of the descent. To our left a smooth thread of snow, the termination of the other branch of the *couloir*, formed an easy road to our destination. But the rocks between us and it were absolutely impracticable, so to reach it we should have had to make a long ascent.

Imboden cautiously advanced to the edge of the cliff and had a good look over. We waited in suspense, thinking of the dripping rocks we were on, and contrasting them with the comfortable hut and cosy tents below.

Presently Imboden pronounced the descent "safe enough with great care," and, adding "It *must* go!" he launched forth his axe and sent it flying through the air on to the snow slopes below, telling us to do the same. This was burning our ships with a vengeance, but of course we obeyed.

Now began the final struggle with the mountain. The rocks, though steep and unpleasantly glacier-worn, were firm, so, by looking carefully for the infrequent holds, we got on tolerably well. There is only one bit I recall with vividness. It was near the end, and Imboden was worming himself over a rather nasty place when we realised that the rope was up. "Oh dear," said Imboden, "if only I had a couple of metres more! I can't stop where I am!" There are moments of this sort when holds seem positively to grow out of the rock on the instant, and when knowing that a thing has to be done one finds that somehow one can do it. Telling Emil to hold fast, I slung myself from a good hand-hold to a famous foot-hold which none of us had seen till that moment, and with great elation called to Imboden to go on as I was in a place where, to use a climber's phrase, I could "hold a cow."

Our difficulties terminated a few minutes later, and presently a funny sight might have been seen, for three climbers were staggering along across a slope, with an amazingly

inelegant action of hands stuck in the snow, in search of their respective ice-axes! The end of the *couloir* was the end of the incidents of the day, and the comforts of camp were not long in replacing the discomforts of descending a high mountain enveloped in a waterfall.

CHAPTER VII

SOME CLIMBS FROM JAEGERVAND

Atrocious as was the weather for the first few days at Jaegervand, it got even worse during the second week of our stay. We contrived, however, to make a couple of new ascents, both of easy mountains, the Firedalertind on 10th August and the Forholttind on the 13th. From the former we returned in a terrific gale, to find our boat blown away and two of our tents down, one of which had a couple of poles broken across as if they had been of matchwood. These tents are of the Whymper pattern, made by Messrs Edgington, of Duke Street, London Bridge, and have proved all I could wish. They are absolutely waterproof, are commodious, and are quickly erected. In them we had portable bedsteads with thin hair mattresses, blankets, pillows and sheets. The

washing basins and buckets for fetching water were of Willesdon canvas.

Our ascent of the Forholttind only merits notice because on our way to that mountain we found and crossed a pass—the Forholtkar—of the greatest practical use to climbers at Jaegervand. This pass connects by a pleasant, direct and easy route the glacier of Forholt with the head of the magnificent ice stream of the great Stortinddals glacier, and as many noble peaks are situated round the upper snows of this glacier, it is essential to have as rapid a way as possible of reaching them from Jaegervand. The pass cannot be mistaken. It lies between the Forholttind (which is a square-topped mountain exactly at the head of the Forholt glacier, and visible from the village of Jaegervand) and some rocky buttresses of the Trold. It is approached by two *couloirs*, divided by rocks and stones. The western *couloir* is the quicker and easier.

The alternative route to the Stortinddals glacier is by way of the Stortinddal—a veritable abomination of desolation, strewn with stones, and long and tedious to the last degree,

UNDERGROWTH NEAR OUR CAMP.

To face page 91.

with none of that charming vegetation which, thanks to the benign influence of the Gulf Stream, it has been ever my surprise and delight to find in these northern regions.

The woods at the back of our camp at Jaegervand were filled with beautiful lady ferns, amongst which when we walked we were hidden to the shoulder. Oak and beech fern, parsley fern and prickly shield (botanists, forgive me for my ignorance of their Latin names) abounded, and exquisite heaths and mosses. Late in summer, when the hill-sides begin to put on their gorgeous crimson mantles of bilberry, I cannot imagine a more perfect combination of stern mountain form and glittering ice, with warm-hued, tender lowland beauty held together in an ever-clinging embrace by the fjords, the beautiful arms of the sea.

The third week that we were at Jaegervand the weather was even worse than any we had yet experienced. On one or two occasions we got ready to start for an ascent, but invariably before we set out the rain decided the matter for us. We devised many forms

of indoor employment. I learnt column after column of Norwegian words, which I let off with indifferent success during the tri-weekly visits of the milkman, and to the occasional Lapps who called on us with a request to be ferried over the neighbouring river. When the rain momentarily left off we went a-fishing, but as the water was as thick as milk we caught nothing.

The guides amused themselves in various ways. Imboden cut up wood for the fire, cleaned his gun, greased our boots, and told many and excellent stories. Emil worked, under my instruction, with grammar and dictionary at English, and did the washing up after our meals, which I cooked. Thus the days passed on, and at last we began to ask ourselves whether we should be able to go up even one more peak before the date fixed for our departure—Wednesday, 31st August.

On the evening of the 24th, however, things looked rather more promising; in fact, the weather was what in the Alps we should call quite hopeless, but such as in Norway one referred to as not so bad, inasmuch as it

IMBODEN BUSIES HIMSELF IN CAMP.

face page 92.

was not actually raining, there was no wind, and here and there a watery-looking strip of blue sky was visible.

The next morning matters were no worse, so at 7 A.M. we set out, our idea being to go as far as the Forholt pass, and, if the weather still kept fine, attempt the ascent of a grand, rocky, unclimbed mountain at the head of the Stortinddals glacier. If, however, the weather was not good enough for this, there were other and shorter virgin peaks which we could try.

By 10 A.M., as we stepped on to the Forholt pass, snow was falling lightly. The wind too had risen, but it was not cold, and we were loth to descend without accomplishing something. So we decided to cross the great *plateau* at the head of the Stortinddals glacier, and then see.

It has been laid down as a canon of mountaineering, that if a party is doubtful as to the wisdom of continuing an ascent on account of bad weather, and the guides refuse to give an opinion one way or the other, that party ought to turn back, and should not be deluded into

the pernicious habit induced by the suggestion, "Let us go on for a little and then see."

Now, in Lapland it sometimes becomes necessary to run counter to the rules laid down for the guidance of prudent mountaineers elsewhere, and the phrase, "Let us go on for a little and then see," will often be said and acted on when climbing in the Land of the Midnight Sun.

As we advanced across the wide *plateau*, we stuck our axes deeply into the snow at every step, knowing full well that our foot-marks would very likely be obliterated by the time we returned, and that we might have a fog to contend with. It does not seem generally known that the holes made by the spike of an axe remain visible in the snow for several hours after the foot-marks have disappeared. An example of the value of such a means of guidance occurred some years ago on Mont Blanc, when a party was for a time absolutely lost in a fearful snow-storm. When they almost despaired of re-gaining the Grands Mulets, the porter, a quick-sighted and observant boy of about seventeen,

observed traces of the holes left by the axes, and, following these up, the party was enabled to descend in safety. The young fellow developed afterwards into a guide of the very first rank.

When we were near the opposite side of the glacier, Emil, who was leading, turned round and enquired what mountain we proposed going up, a question which at that stage of the day's work seemed rather irrelevant.

"Well," answered Imboden, "I think we will take a little walk round the Deut du Géant over there, and see what he looks like on the other side."

There was no doubt as to the identity of the peak to which Imboden referred, so we proceeded towards the inaccessible-looking tooth in front of us, and hoped it might have a weak spot somewhere. As we drew closer, I asked Imboden what he thought, but he answered that perhaps after all we should do something else; and, tempted to more ambitious designs by a temporary improvement in the weather, I saw his eyes raised to the great rocky peak to our left.

But very soon it began to snow again, and

then we turned in earnest to the sharp tooth of rock, now quite close to us.

"I think—yes, I am sure we shall get up," Imboden remarked as we topped the ridge, and had a view of the other side. A stony *couloir* was disclosed, and above it a crack or narrow chimney up which we hoped to swarm. Leaving knapsacks and axes on the ridge (which here forms a true pass to the head of the Kopang glacier), we commenced the scramble. At the top of the *couloir* we turned a tiny rock-tower by the face to our right, and then doubled back so as to gain the foot of the chimney. This contained too much loose hand-hold to be climbed in a hurry, and Emil and I sheltered behind a rock while Imboden threw down quantities of insecure stones. We then had a pleasant scramble with fingers and shoulders and elbows to the top of the chimney, whence the short ridge leading to the summit was gained.

The snow had ceased for a few minutes, and it was mild and pleasant sitting by the tiny pointed top, while Emil sought for stones—which here, where we wanted them, were

THE GROUP OF THE JAEGERVANDTINDER, FROM THE ISSKARTIND.

To face page 96.

none too plentiful—to make the usual cairn. The name Imboden had called the little peak by suited it so well that we straightway translated it into Norwegian and christened it the *Kjoempes Tand.* Regaining the pass below, we decided that it was just possible to do another new mountain before going home.

We had noticed from the summits of various other peaks a fine-looking mass of rock with a snow top, rather like a table with a very skimpy cloth on it. This rose in a grand rocky wall from the lower portion of the Stortinddals glacier. We now found ourselves at the other side of this mountain, and it was obviously easy to go up it. We therefore set off at a swinging pace across the head of the Imboden glacier, and in a blinding snow-storm ascended a steep, stony slope, then over a little ice, and finally over more stones to what during a momentarily lifting of the clouds we saw was without doubt the summit. Hastily constructing a stone man, we dashed down again, crossed the glacier (passing to our left two fine little *aiguilles* which some day we hoped to climb) and rejoined the knapsacks, well

satisfied at having accomplished a couple of first ascents in such awful weather. A hasty meal, and we were off again to cross the great snowy waste which lay between us and the Forholt pass. Our foot-marks were absolutely obliterated, but the little holes made by the axes were clearly seen, and very glad we were of them as so thick a fog prevailed that we could see nothing except each other.

From the pass we tumbled down the *couloir* with what haste we could, ending with a splendid glissade, which landed us on the level glacier beneath. Hence we made the best of our way home in drenching rain, and right welcome was the sight of the three green tents and the cosy wooden *saeter*, where soon we had a big fire and plenty of dry clothes for which to exchange our sodden garments.

Just as I was about to retire to my tent that evening Imboden observed with much elation, after a prolonged study of the sky: "I really do believe we may have a middling day to-morrow!"

It was agreed that we should start about 7 A.M., if the weather was at all possible; and

the next morning it was just possible, and no more. So we set off in the *Dampschiff*, as the guides called our leaky little hired boat, and proceeded down the lake in search of a peak which would "go" after the fresh snow of the previous day.

Imboden when out shooting had noticed a rather sharply-pointed mountain near the beginning of the Strupen valley, and had kept it in mind as a suitable peak to ascend when the higher and harder ones would be unsafe. So, leaving that precious *Dampschiff* (of which more anon) at the end of the lake, we strolled over bilberry-clad slopes to the foot of a little glacier, at the head of which our mountain, with a hood and cape of fresh snow covering it to below the shoulders, coquettishly waved some delicate wreaths of mist between ourselves and her charming face.

The day was still doubtful, in fact we had more than once glanced hither and thither for a boulder of suitable projection to give us shelter from the expected rain. But neither the boulder nor the rain was forthcoming, and presently our peak dropped her silvery, floating

cloud and broke out into dazzling smiles as the sun touched her fair white head here and there with a golden ray.

Surely a mountain freshly covered with a robe of pure, white snow is as unsullied a thing of beauty as we can ever gaze on. It seems nearly sacrilege to tread down the glittering, delicate surface, stamping it with the stamp of intrusive humanity. To me snow-texture is an extraordinarily beautiful thing ; and, perhaps because I have noticed it so much in connection with winter photography in the Alps, I am always urging others to open their eyes as wide as possible to the endless variety of its lights and shadows.

But I digress sadly. Let us hasten back to the foot of the bewitching mountain which is drawn up to her full height in front of us. We had seen from the beginning of the glacier a heap of stones at the bottom of the peak, and from this Imboden made sure that where the stones came down was a gully, and up that gully we could probably go. And go up it we did — somewhat hastily, it is true, to minimise the risk of our being swept down it

by further stones. When near the ridge we entered the region of the new snow. Though it had fallen only the day before, it was already much more compacted than it would have been in so short a time in the Alps. This we found to be always the case in the north; I suppose because the temperature is higher, and the snow is therefore wet and binds easily, and is thus quite unlike the dry, powdery snow of Switzerland. In fact, I cannot but think that the higher the mean temperature the better will be the snow—provided, of course, that the heat does not melt away the snow altogether. The winter snow in the high Alps is nearly always so dry and light that one sinks to the knees in it. Snow, to harden, must have heat or pressure. The latter it receives on lofty and exposed ridges in winter from the wind; and thus I have often found the snow hard and good on *arêtes* in January and February, when on the slopes, and especially on the *plateaux*, both higher and lower, the going has been execrable.

The new snow, then, to come back to our peak, did not bother us much, and the climbing

was fairly easy, and by midday I was photographing on the summit, while Emil erected his stone man. Our point of view was grand, and as the weather was now fine and warm, we were able to enjoy it to the full. I ventured to call the little peak the Elizabethtind, finding no neighbouring glacier or valley after which to name it.

The descent was accomplished without incident, and the *Dampschiff* found intact. That *Dampschiff* treated me very badly soon after we first had it. Neither of the guides could row, and Emil had never seen a boat or eaten a fish till he came to join me. He was anxious for instruction in the propelling of our craft, and I imparted it to him to the best of my small ability. There was one point I tried to impress on him as the first rule of boating, and that was to make sure that the cork was in before shoving off from land. That injunction seemed to me, in a hazy sort of way, to end my responsibility in the matter, so one day, when we went fishing with tackle, which was fearfully and wonderfully improvised, I gaily pushed off without a

thought of the cork. When we were quite in the middle of the lake, Emil exclaimed, "Aber was!" and began to bail in his usual deliberate manner. I watched him for a moment or two, and then it began to dawn on me that the boat was filling fast. Turning my head I saw green water bubbling up, and through a circular hole many feet of green water below. The cork was nowhere to be seen. Of course, people accustomed to boats would have stuffed up the hole with a handkerchief and continued fishing, but I was unused to such an adventure as this and felt horribly scared. I seized the first thing which was handy — my mackintosh—and pushed a corner into the awful green hole, placing my foot above, while I wildly looked about for the cork. "Emil," said I, "row to shore for all you are worth!" "Das will ich thun," replied he, without turning a hair; in fact I think he rather enjoyed the occurrence, which probably he considered almost as entertaining as the fire! At last I descried the cork, and nerved myself for another look down the hole while I jammed it in. Then, with the foot

of caution once more pressed down to keep all safe, and bailing as fast as I could, we gradually approached land. On examining the boat I found that the cork was so poor a fit that a stone had been put on it to keep it in place.

We had one other rather exciting incident with regard to the boat, for during a terrific storm she was swept right off the bank, whirled down the lake, over the rapids and out into the seething waters of the fjord. As my bill contained an item of four krone for repairing and recovering her, I imagine that she gave a lot of trouble to the good people of Jaegervand. But of that I will say more in the next chapter.

A STORMY MORNING.

To face page 105.

CHAPTER VIII

A STORM AT JAEGERVAND

GREAT is the contrast between the wild tempests of Nordland and its calm, cloudless days. We experienced both at Jaegervand, and the storm I have specially in my mind was so sudden and violent that it remains to me a type of what such storms can be.

One morning very early—about six o'clock, I think—we were returning from a climb which we had made during the night. Except in early summer, when the sunlight lingers ever on the mountains, a climb at night is to me extremely depressing. I cannot tell why this is so, but I know that when I have been at work for some hours in that light which is neither of the day nor of the night, I begin to feel strangely downhearted, and mountaineering seems but a poor thing after all.

It was after a night of this sort that we were returning down a particularly stony and desolate valley, itself enough to give one an attack of the blues, to Jaegervand. My usual feelings at that hour were neither improved by the surroundings, by the recollection that we had reached the summit far too early for photography, nor by the fact that we had been chilled to the bone by a biting wind, and that now, an hour or so from camp, a storm, which had come suddenly tearing across the pale blue sky of dawn, was about to break furiously on us. And break it did.

As we silently and doggedly trudged on, the wind shrieking around us and the rain descending in torrents, we suddenly caught sight of the lake. It was milky green in colour, and raked up by the gale into angry foam-edged waves. My heart sank yet more. It was Wednesday, and somehow or other I must before evening get a letter home posted on the steamer, which at that time called but once a week at the village of Jaegervand.

Our clumsy boat, if manned by a couple of experienced natives and with the wind at her

back, would have been safe enough on the lake. But my guides knew nothing about boats, and Emil had tried rowing only a few times. I row a little myself, but I wondered if I dare venture on a six-miles row thus poorly seconded in such awful weather, especially after having been out on a mountain all night. I thought not, yet somehow that letter had to go.

It may seem that under the circumstances the obvious course was to walk. But this the guides were naturally reluctant to do if we could manage otherwise, for much of the ground by the lake is a hideous swamp, and a river has to be forded.

Thus gloomily pondering, we reached the tents. I had not been two minutes in mine when I heard Imboden exclaim that his would stand up no longer, and sure enough it immediately proceeded to subside quietly against mine, which still, however, kept its footing, though it swayed violently with the force of the storm. I struggled wildly with a basin of water and a change of clothes, determined to get through my toilet before the whole thing came down

on my head. When I emerged Emil's tent was already flat on the ground, with two of the poles broken. Imboden's had propped itself against mine, and altogether the whole encampment looked decidedly crazy. I pulled the tents into a position in which they could not get further damaged, and then went into the hut where the guides sat dozing. It was a long and weary morning, for I was desperately sleepy and had nowhere to go and rest. So I too sat in a chair and dozed till it was time to begin cooking the dinner.

While we dined, we discussed the expedition to Jaegervand village; and as the wind was by now rather less, we hoped the lake would soon be calmer. I turned to the window to look out.

Horrors! *The boat was gone!* She had been pulled well up the bank, but such a gale as we were experiencing was almost enough to send the capital of Switzerland itself out to sea.

Well, this narrowed down our plans considerably. In fact, nothing remained except for the guides to walk.

At 2.30 P.M. they set off, telling me not to expect their return till the next day, for I had begged them to await better weather in the "town."

So for the first time in my life I was left absolutely alone, miles from any other human being—quite, entirely alone!

No one can picture a safer country than I was in. Still, the first experience of complete solitude, especially to a woman, is strange, and in my case was accentuated by the knowledge that I was in a place which it was not easy to get out of. Of course, if I wished I could walk, as the guides had done. But I was not at all sure if I could ford the river alone, now swollen far beyond its usual size. I knew of a place a couple of hours further up, near the foot of the glacier, where I could get over, but the marshes had anyhow to be crossed. The other bank of the lake was still more inaccessible, as a large and rapid river lay between me and it, so it is small wonder if the camp seemed just then not unlike a prison, from which to escape was difficult.

To escape! How childish to think of such a thing! There I was, of my own free will, perfectly safe and prepared to enjoy myself. So first I washed up the dinner things. Then I wrote a little and read. After that I had a look at the weather. The rain had nearly ceased and the wind was considerably less, so, feeling rather uneasy about the tents, I put on my strongest boots and prospected. It occurred to me that it would be pleasant to have all straight and comfortable by the time the guides returned in the morning, so with a good will I set to work.

As Emil's poles were broken his tent was useless till we could mend them, so I slipped them out and put away the canvas and the furniture under the shed, bringing the bedding to the hut. Then I took down Imboden's tent, having first removed all its contents, which were reduced to a sort of marmalade by the wind. They were none the worse, however, when sorted; and after I had put up the tent again and made it this time thoroughly secure, I was able to put all back inside and leave it in apple-pie order. My tent had

suffered least; and after it was straightened and the guy-ropes attended to, I felt that I might venture to sleep in it that night if the wind continued to drop.

The little encampment in the growing dusk looked strange and lonely. Behind me the forest was very silent. Occasionally I fancied I heard the tingle of a reindeer's bell, but none of these animals came in sight. From over the water now and again the wailing cry of a bird fell on my ear. The evening was closing in, and the air touched me with a damp and clinging hand.

I turned from the scene and went into the hut. Cautiously lighting a small fire—I dared not have a large one, with so strong a wind —I began to cook my supper, musing on the new experience I had had. The storm and the solitude — the latter rather appealed to me. To be alone and to have work: there are many worse fates, but the work must be congenial, it must be progressive. Further, it must admit of occasional intercourse with other workers, of excursions to a great city as well as to the calm of a mountain-top. It must

exercise body and mind, and it must be not wholly of one's choice. For, strangely enough, I have often carried out to a better ending a task imposed than one selected. I recollect a good many years ago the sinking of heart I experienced when a certain famous editor, to whose training I owe much, picked out from an album half a dozen of my photographs and remarked: "Fifteen hundred words on that by the end of the week, please."

He always appeared to me to choose pictures that had no connection with each other, and at first I used to sit at my writing-table when I got home and gaze at them in despair. But soon I found that with the help of pen, paper and a good will it was perfectly possible to weld them into a consistent whole; and after a little time I acquired a certain knack of encircling with words a group of subjects that appeared at first sight to be totally distinct from each other.

In mountaineering, as in writing, we have often to work much against the grain. How wearisome it is to get up before one has had

a full night's rest, and plod over monotonous ground with bowed heads and in the silence that falls on even the most talkative member of the party as he steadily rises above the valley. How exasperating are the slopes of loose stones, the long waits while steps are cut in the steep ice wall, the everlasting annoyance of the handling of the rope! Yet again and again one lightly submits to it all, for is not the reward worth all the trouble?

And in our Northern playground many of the most trying features of Alpine climbing were absent. No rising before daybreak was necessary, no pressing onwards when a halt would be pleasant, no crowded huts and uncongenial parties spoilt one's enjoyment of the scenery, no curious tourists lounging round the door of a hotel watched us return after a trying expedition. When we struck camp, no hotel bill was presented to us, nor were there servants to tip; and no provisions we could have obtained at an exorbitant price in a fashionable climbing centre would have been half so palatable as those we prepared ourselves in our hut.

Our life may seem to have been a rough one to the superficial observer, but amongst ourselves we agreed that never during all the years of our mountaineering had we enjoyed so much real comfort and so few drawbacks.

As I reflected on our quaint existence and leisurely prepared to retire that evening I heard a distant call, and hastening to the back of the hut I presently saw my two guides striding down towards me, their pockets bulging with the incoming mail. They had determined, if at all possible, to return to me that night, and had gallantly forded rivers and plodded through bogs in order to do so. The villagers had entreated them to wait till next day, when they could return by boat; but they put the temptation aside, and insisted on setting out for a repetition of as unpleasant a walk as it is possible to imagine. I was glad that I could welcome them with a house in order.

IMBODEN GOES SHOOTING AT JAEGERVAND ON AN OFF DAY.

To face page 115.

CHAPTER IX

THE END OF THE SEASON AT JAEGERVAND

After being blessed for once with a lovely evening we hoped much for a good day, and the morning after our ascent of the Elizabethtind was an ideal one, being windless and cloudless. In high spirits we set out for the Forholt pass, bent on a serious attempt to go up the Trold from the east. But in the north the changes of weather are terribly sudden. By the time we reached the glacier clouds were chasing each other wildly across the tremendous cliff which forms the head of the Trold, and when we got to the top of the pass it was snowing. Had people ever such shocking weather for climbing as fell to our lot that August! We hoped it was a record.

While we gloomily ate our lunch under the partial shelter of a large stone, we decided that the sooner we went home the

better; and my ideas were not modified when I struggled with my camera to the saddle in the hope of taking a photograph of the Kjoempes Tand. I could scarcely stand against the gale, and was glad to quickly turn and hasten towards shelter. As I did so, I saw Imboden, a grotesque figure, his hat tied on with a red handkerchief, the ends of which fluttered wildly in the storm, standing on the rock ridge and signing to me to join him. I did so, and then he said: "Look here, ma'am, it is possible to go for some way up this ridge. Let us keep on as long as we are able, and perhaps we shall see something which will save us half a day another time."

We accordingly set off, being partially sheltered, and for an hour we had the very best climb I enjoyed that summer. The rocks were big and firm. We were able to thrust fingers and toes into good, honest holds, and towards the end we met with a chimney which it was bliss to go up. Laughing, and helping each other with ice-axes placed under the feet, we emerged breathless

close to the top of so fine a rock, and of so distinct a personality that we forthwith gave it a name, and lo! it became a separate mountain.

The Klyveklippe was too breezy a place to tarry long, so we commenced retrograde gymnastics and got safely to the pass. Thence we passed over the now familiar ground to camp, which we reached just in time to save the tents from utter collapse, one pole having already snapped. We took them down, re-erected mine under the shelter of the hut, and folded away the others, the guides sleeping in the hut for the remaining few nights.

The next morning, to our amazement, the weather was perfect. Indeed, so fine did it appear that we hardly liked to start, feeling persuaded it would change abruptly before long. It was 10.15 A.M. when we set out, and this time we were bound for the Isskar, or Ice Pass, a high snowy gap close to the Isskartind and visible from our camp. We got to it after a tiresome grind of more than three hours, and had leisure while we ate our lunch on the top to study the queer, ragged, inaccessible-looking little peak just opposite,

the object of our hopes and fears. We knew that bad as it looked on the side facing us, it was ten times worse on the other side. A *couloir* — it looked vertical — ran straight down the west face and seemed to offer the only hope—and that a remote one—of gaining the summit. We could also, if we wished, try the south ridge, but at two points this seemed as if it might not "go." Crossing the broad *plateau* of the glacier, we mounted a short and steep snow-slope and deposited our axes on the stones above. We then braced ourselves for a real scramble. I mean that I fastened the wrist buttons of my blouse and tied my hat on more firmly, while Imboden let out the rope to its full length.

Now that I come to think of it, I have only a confused recollection of that upward climb, when the nails in Imboden's boots and the top of Emil's hat were the chief points of view above and below. The *couloir* or chimney — for into such it soon narrowed— was wet and slippery from the melting of a patch of fresh snow above. This constituted the difficulty of the last few feet, where

for a step or two there is little handhold. The climb needed care, and receiving it was perfectly safe. As Imboden topped the last bad bit he turned to Emil, saying: "Shall I help you, mein Liebchen?" Emil's expressive "Ach!"—which is patois for "No, thank you, father, I don't need it"—was hardly complimentary to so highly respectable a chimney. Gaining the ridge, we were in a few minutes on the summit, a summit which it gave us much satisfaction to have reached. We called the mountain the Tre Gygre, or Three Witches Peak.

There was one more peak still unascended at the head of the Isskar glacier, and this we forthwith decided to make for. It was a great contrast to the formidable-looking little mountain which we had just been up. It was composed of very loose rock, and as the angle was considerable we had to be very careful not to send down huge stones on each other. So the usual conversation might have been heard by any one so idiotic as to be in our neighbourhood at the time. We pointed out particularly unsafe stones

of deceptive appearance to each other, we hid our heads behind projecting points like ostriches and announced that we were well sheltered, whereupon ensued a tremendous cannonade and a horrible mess on the white snow-slopes below. We reviled the shocking state of disrepair of the peaks, a condition absolutely unknown to the Alpine climber, who, poor innocent, fancies that the Bietschhorn is rather a rotten mountain; and we finally gained the firmer rocks near the summit with only a few extra scratches on our hands, and a nail or two gone from our boots. The rock was yellow in colour, so we named the peak the Gyldentind.

We sat some time on the top, as the afternoon was a lovely one and the view magnificent. The sky was of a deep blue above our heads, and the fjords a paler hue beneath us. Here and there clouds were sailing amongst the heavenward-rising peaks around us, looking like white-winged

> "Angels, who patrol the evening, or stand
> sentry to the dawn,
> Or pace the wide air everlastingly."

From amongst the mountains to the north streamed right down to the valley the huge Stortinddals glacier, without haste and without rest. I often think when I see a great glacier, that in its firm, majestic curves and even movement it recalls the stately rhythm of some solemn piece of music.

We had a tedious and stony walk down from the Iss pass to the valley below, which we reached as it began to grow dusk. Here we saw a wildly-picturesque scene. Hundreds of reindeer, at this season looking their best, were being collected by a crowd of Lapps, who were ably assisted by their bushy-haired, active little dogs, which ran hither and thither, barking at the heels of the stately herd.

The slopes about here are covered with the dead remnants of extensive forests. The peasant who strips the birch trees of their bark in order to roof his house with the most combustible material he can find, is recklessly destroying mile after mile of woods, and the old trees having perished there is left no shelter for young ones to grow up in these exposed places. In many places, such as

Lyngseidet, there is abundance of excellent slate, so why he should prefer to roof his dwellings with bark is a mystery to me. In fact, I cannot understand why none of the houses, except the more modern ones in Christiania and Trondhjem, are of stone. No doubt wood is cheaper, but it is less durable and easily destroyed by fire, so one would think that in many cases stone or concrete would be preferred. Yet everywhere we find entire towns, with their churches and public buildings, constructed solely of timber. Many of the houses are painted white. Others are coloured a deep red, and, when kept as their owners usually keep them, they certainly look very clean and neat. Some, instead of a sloping roof of wood, have a nearly flat roof turfed over, and upon this hanging meadow springs up by degrees all manner of plants, even trees occasionally taking root in it.

On the top of one of the huts we occupied were several bushes of considerable size, which lent a particularly rustic air to our primitive dwelling. It did not, however, prove a completely water-tight covering, and

some years later, when my husband and I took up our abode for a few weeks in this hut, we were obliged, during heavy rains, to hang the fly-sheet of one of the tents above us.

CHAPTER X

OUR LAST ASCENT THAT YEAR

THE time had come to move, so the following day we struck camp, and with a fleet of three boats—for our *Dampschiff* was too small to take any luggage—we went down to the village of Jaegervand. It was the first time I had seen the view from there on a fine day, and I thought it the most beautiful in the neighbourhood; it would be a pleasant place for artists, anglers and those who are not climbers to camp.

Our arrival caused much excitement, and the whole township—more than a dozen people—turned out to view the erection of the green tents. They did not wish on any account to be impolite, but to so primitive a people, who conduct most of their business by an exchange of kind, the spending of a small sum of coin is a great and rare excitement. They were

no doubt anxious to establish in their minds a fair rate of prices, and it must have been extremely difficult for them to know how far a gulden would go towards the purchase of some of the articles that were lying about on their beach. Further, they had no intention of interrupting the setting-up of our camp; but, while we, in English fashion, were steadily proceeding with the work in hand, they, in their ample leisure, thought to show a sociable spirit and acquire useful information at the same time. So, while we pulled at guy ropes and unrolled bedding, a spectator would enquire: "And what did this cost?" and, looking round, we would discern a man in a red shirt holding aloft a folding-chair. One felt inclined to bid a few öre to start the sale, so closely did the whole proceeding resemble an auction.

The population were getting such evident enjoyment out of the gratuitous entertainment we provided for them, that we had not the heart to unduly hasten our preparations. But the moment came when we were hungry, and the cooking of our supper offered a still more engrossing "turn" to the onlookers.

At this stage we were able to utilise some of the spectators. We needed milk—a youth was hustled off to get it. Fish was to form the *pièce de resistance*—a corner of the tidal pool close by was dragged, and green-backed, glistening salmon trout were shortly after dancing in a net on the bank. A sheltered hole was found for the spirit-lamp, and immediately a quarter of the population sat round it to see the saucepan boil, and plates, cups, knives and forks began to appear in due course. Our crockery was, of course, of enamelled iron, and evoked bursts of admiration. I did not fancy seeing the various utensils held up between finger and thumb, so I hastily suggested that Imboden should ring on another turn and offer portions of tobacco to the bystanders. This distracted their attention from all else for quite a long time, and it was not till our table was laid and coffee stood ready on it that they began once more to interest themselves in our doings.

And I am obliged to admit that in the matter of coffee they could, every one of them, give points to the best cooks I have ever met

with in any other country. Six summers of such coffee as we drank daily in those regions have utterly ruined my liking for coffee elsewhere. And the strange thing about it is, that it is made in the simplest possible manner. A hundred times have I seen Hildur make coffee, and made it myself in the same way, and always has it turned out perfection. Yet, when I have returned home and entreated my cook to follow on the same lines, the coffee has been undrinkable, as it invariably is, to my mind, all over France and Switzerland.

In Norway the coffee is made in an ordinary saucepan. The water boils, the coffee, freshly ground, is put in, the saucepan remains on the fire, its contents boil again for a moment, and then are allowed to simmer. Just before the coffee is required the pan is stood aside, the grounds settle, and the liquid is poured into a hot coffee-pot or jug. That is absolutely the whole of the proceedings that result in the most delicious beverage I have ever tasted.

At first the guides hardly appreciated the virtues of coffee such as this. Their taste was vitiated by the home article, and the

flavour of chicory—to me so unpleasant—they missed in the purer concoction. Imboden used to urge me to put some of "that stuff we use in Switzerland" in it to make it black, and he wondered why it was opaque and not clear, but after a time they came to like it as much as I did.

Even at the tiny village of Jaegervand the serving of coffee was done in a way that would have astonished a newcomer. The whole of the family treasures, amongst poor people, consist in their coffee services, and certainly both the silver and its contents are worthy of each other. Often, after rowing down to Jaegervand to fetch the mails, we have been regaled with coffee at the post office. The postmaster's wife, while her husband counted out from amongst the rest the greater number of the letters and papers which were invariably our portion, always hastened to prepare coffee, and insisted on our accepting it. She brought it in on a small silver tray, steaming in a little silver coffee-pot, with a quaint silver jug of delicious cream, and sugar in a silver sugar basin. I

AT THE VILLAGE OF JAEGERVAND,

To face page 128.

imagine that the means of suitably carrying out the rite are a badge of respectability, so that the family would cling to their coffee service, which no doubt was the property of their forefathers, after they had parted with everything else in the world.

At last, about 8.30 P.M., when we were half way through our dinner, they left us; but the next morning, long before I was up, I heard many footsteps round the camp. While packing on my knees later on in my tent, I felt one of my feet being gently taken hold of, and looking round I saw a girl sitting in the doorway gazing with exceeding interest at my nailed boot, which she evidently thought was a real curiosity.

With reference to boots, it is desirable to bear in mind that they must be exceptionally strong for climbing in the North. The boggy ground in the valleys and the stones on the mountains make a footgear of very durable quality essential. I brought two pair of strong climbing boots from Switzerland, and both were worthless at the end of the season. Imboden and Emil had the same experience.

Some seasons later I speculated in a pair of Norwegian boots, of the make specially intended for ski-running. These I purchased at Trondhjem, and they were so great a success that I am still wearing them in Switzerland in winter, after having used them for mountaineering during an entire season in the Alps. The whole of the lower part of the boot is in one piece, which makes them very water-tight; and as the tongue is simply a loose, thin piece of leather joined up at each side, water is excluded even from the upper part of the boot. It is usual with these boots to wear a thick, rough sock within, and when this is done the feet remain warm even in the coldest weather.

I do not think, however, that the winters in the Land of the Midnight Sun are ever excessively cold as compared with the temperatures experienced in the heights of Switzerland. Yesterday evening, when I was working on the manuscript of this book, the thermometer at Davos Platz went down to more than 53 degrees of frost. In such a climate double windows are essential, yet I have nowhere

in Lapland seen anything but single ones. Further, one must remember that the long warm coast line must keep the whole of the land near it at a much higher temperature than it is further away.

It is really astonishing, when one thinks of the frozen Baltic, so much further south, to recollect that all the winter a regular service of mail steamers is kept up right along the coast and round the North Cape. In spite of the darkness and the fogs that so often prevail, these boats work their way with but few accidents through the narrow channels, between islands, amongst sunken rocks, and in and out of fjords, across the wild Vestfjord to Lofoten, and around the most northerly point of Europe. The coast is well lit, of course. An infinite number of small lights and many lighthouses are planted at the most intricate parts of the course, yet how intricate and difficult it is I never realised till I went down it myself one autumn when the dark nights had set in. The pilot told me that the steering was done by the watch. So many minutes at a given speed were allowed in a certain direction, indicated by

the compass from one light until the next was sighted, a mode of progress impossible in the open sea where strong and varying currents and storms would upset such nicety of calculation, but quite feasible in landlocked water the surface of which is never more than lightly ruffled in comparison with the ocean.

And all the winter the Gulf Stream keeps up its genial flow, and while a lake such as Jaegervand, of considerable depth and 6 miles long, freezes thickly over at the approach of winter, the fjord but a few feet below and some half-dozen yards away remains always open water. Well is it for the country that this is so. At so high a latitude it would otherwise be uninhabitable, and one can easily imagine it, if in another part of the globe, offering little to the explorer but a succession of great glaciers, their feet reaching down to the ice-bound sea.

It is worth while making at least one journey down the coast, when the long night of winter has set in, on the chance of seeing a good display of the Northern Lights. Never shall I forget one evening on board a mail-boat

when, coming on deck after supper, for the first time I witnessed this marvellous pageant of Arctic lands. It was totally unlike all my preconceived ideas of the phenomenon, and seemed strangely uncanny. Across the sky towards the north stretched dark bars. Behind them trembled a perfectly white light, now dying down, now brightening, but ever vibrating. It was so different to anything I had imagined that at first I could only enquire, "What is it?" And as it continued and seemed at times to lighten the whole of the northern sky, I gazed at it with ever-deepening awe.

Another beautiful appearance that I have seen once or twice late in the season off this coast was a display of phosphorescence. The sea was like liquid moonshine. In fact, while a voyage to the North in summer is full of interest and beauty, a return voyage in late autumn is in its own way as fascinating, and the one forms an admirable pendant to the other.

The next morning we struck camp, and, again assisted by the entire population, we got all ready to embark.

Amid hearty farewells and warm invitations

to return the following year, we set off in a little boat to the good ship *Tromso*, where the captain, genial as ever, received us on board. We had to go to Lyngseidet to pack away the camping kit for the winter and to fetch luggage left there, and about 3 P.M. we found ourselves once more the guest of Herre and Fru Gjoever.

We hoped to climb another peak before starting homeward. This was a fine, high, square-topped rock mountain at the head of the Kjosen glacier. No one knew whether or not it had a name, so we christened it the Faestning, or Fortress. I cannot give its height, nor have I been able to give the heights of any of the peaks we ascended except the Kjostind, which is 5,414 feet; but I fancy that the Stortind and Isskartind and a few others must be close on 6,000 feet, which, as the rise is direct above sea-level, is a considerable height—double the average height of the very striking peaks of the Lofoten islands, and about the same as that of the Matterhorn from the Schwarz See.

I have little to say about our ascent of the

Fortress; it was a steep climb, but nowhere difficult. We went up from the Kjosen glacier by the south-east face to the east ridge and thence to the summit. We took five and a half hours from Lyngseidet to the top, including a halt of three-quarters of an hour. As the first part of the walk is for an hour on the level, this time would in the Alps be a quick one, for, subtracting this hour and the halt, we have a rise of 5,000 feet (and the peak must be quite as high as that) accomplished in three hours forty-five minutes. As a matter of fact, it was not in itself particularly quick, and we went more slowly than was necessary, as the weather was very hot. The simple explanation of the apparently rapid times one makes on these mountains is that it is much easier to breathe during exertion at heights between sea-level and 6,000 feet than between 6,000 feet and 15,700, the height of Mont Blanc. So that, whereas an ascent of the Weisshorn from the now ruined hut to the top in four hours actual going is, I think, a record, the ascent of 6,000 feet from sea-level in four hours would be nothing remarkable.

The ascent of the Fortress brought my climbing for that season to an end. We had exceptionally bad weather during August, yet, thanks to an improvement at the end of the month, we were able to ascend six peaks—all of them new—in five days, and to close the season with a list of eighteen peaks, of which fourteen were first ascents.

We had no difficulties or annoyances as regards our camping out or other arrangements, and I look back to the time as a singularly pleasant one. I came out from England somewhat pulled down from influenza and a tedious bronchial attack. I returned home in the best of health and spirits. We had become acquainted with a delightful region for mountaineering which I looked forward to returning to again and again. We had met with nothing but kindness from all, and finally, in spite of much bad weather, we had managed to accomplish quite a fair amount of climbing.

CHAPTER XI

OUR SECOND CAMPAIGN IN THE NORTH

Our trip to the North the following year opened auspiciously. During ten days of unbroken fine weather I crossed the North Sea (shorn of its terrors for me by the fact that the steamer I was on was three times the size of any of the mail-boats), penetrated some of the most beautiful fjords, took the guides on board at Trondhjem and reached Tromsø in tropical heat on 26th June.

At Tromsø I bid good-bye to the cordial captain and the many acquaintances I had made *en route*, and to the sound of a hearty British cheer and the best of good wishes for a favourable summer's climbing, was rowed ashore to the Custom House. The examination was fairly thorough, but a large piece of bacon, two Dundee cakes and a few other toothsome

trifles in my hold-all escaped the vigilance of the leisurely searchers. In the end I was charged some 16 kronen: not a large sum, I think, considering the abundance of my stores.

We were rather undecided as to where we should first camp. To go to Jaegervand and finish off the mountains there seemed obviously the best plan. But we knew that Mr Hastings was somewhere in the neighbourhood, and we desired to avoid poaching on his preserves, especially in a country where there is enough and to spare in the way of new ascents for all. Soon we heard that Jaegervand was just the place at which Mr Hastings had installed himself, so we settled to go first to Holmebugt, a farm on the east shore of the Sörfjord, which we believed would prove an admirable centre.

The morning after our arrival at Tromsø, followed by vast quantities of luggage, and multitudinous parcels containing legs of mutton and other food, we made our way to the steamer. It was seven o'clock, and the captain would not be visible till breakfast at eight, we were told.

"Of course it is the same captain as last

year?" we enquired; but were informed that this was not so, as he had since been promoted. Our hearts sank—we wanted his help in so many matters. "Can he speak English?" was our next enquiry. "A very little," replied the mate. Our final question was asked only in our minds: "What sort of a man is he?"

It was with a touch of anxious curiosity that we obeyed the summons to breakfast. No captain as yet. We furtively looked round every time the door opened. At last we saw a man's figure darken it. *Now!* A young, pleasant-faced, light-haired person entered, and at his greeting I instantly felt that once more our luck was of the best. His English was fluent, his desire to be useful to us was evident, and we soon found a common acquaintance in the person of Mr Edmund Garwood, who had been in Spitzbergen with our captain and had taken him up a mountain there. With two or three others they remained till after the last of the tourist steamers left, and eventually crossed the Arctic Ocean in a leaky little launch, in the teeth of a gale, to Tromsø. Our captain worked the boat, and referred to the

experience as a rather amusing recollection. Captain Bottolfson merits more than a line of description, for his kindness during the summer was unceasing, and we felt much in his debt.

Holmebugt is some 4 miles beyond the itinerary of the steamer, but on payment of eight kronen an hour she can be taken out of her course. Thus it was that we were enabled to cast anchor in the little bay which soon became so familiar to us. We whistled shrilly for boats to row to us from land. A strong north wind was blowing, and the water was broken up into vicious, rapidly-tumbling, white-tipped waves. The captain stepped after me into the first boat which came alongside, and announced his intention of seeing me safely on shore. He did his share with the oars, and as we approached land took off his boots and stockings and calmly stepped into the sea. I can imagine the consternation of a dignified captain of an English steamer if it were suggested to him that an act such as that described above was part of his duty!

Several journeys backwards and forwards were needed to disembark all our luggage,

THE AUTHOR ON A MOUNTAIN TOP.

THE CAPTAIN OF THE "TROMSØ."

To face page 140.

and meanwhile the captain remained on shore and helped to unload the boats. There are some interesting old coast lines near the houses at Holmebugt; eight or nine distinct terraces are visible between the present water-line and the highest of the buildings. In some parts the old coast lines are several hundred feet above the level of the sea.

The first time one pitches camp for the season the difficulties are greater than on subsequent occasions. I foolishly had not made a list when packing in 1898, and it was not easy to remember where everything had been put away. A boat-house provided excellent shelter from the wind for the tents, and the farmhouse close by gave promise of milk. Next day we found that one of the two houses comprising Holmebugt was empty, and on opening negotiations with Kristianson, the farmer, he agreed to let it to us for as long as we liked at whatever price we thought right. So we were indeed in clover, and, in addition to our tents, in which we slept, had a comfortable sitting-room, a kitchen, and a loft.

But, after all, the chief point in favour of Holmebugt is its ideal situation with regard to the mountains. The number of fine peaks which can be climbed from there is far in excess of that of the Jaegervand group, and the scenery is both more imposing and more beautiful. A magnificent glacier, with two great ice-falls, hangs over the patch of fertile land where we lived, and its blue terraces mount in a stupendous staircase till they merge in Joekkevarre's snowy head, over 6,000 feet above.

The Andersdal with its lakes, the lower one brilliantly blue, and surrounded by trees, two others further up the valley half frozen till the middle of July, its gigantic, moss-bedecked boulders, its rushing torrent, its glacier-hung sides, is close at hand to the south. Further, and to the north, is the Fugledal—the bird valley — a *cul-de-sac* where it looks as if any one venturing must be in constant danger of a cannonade of ice from the fringe of gigantic glaciers which encloses it everywhere except at its narrow entrance.

We were singularly favoured by the weather

HOLMEBUGT, FROM THE FJORD.

face page 142.

during the whole of July, and got ready to start for an excursion the evening after our arrival. It was not easy to know where to begin amongst such a multitude of peaks, but our idea was, as during the previous season, to choose something we felt sure of getting up, in order to see from it the best way to ascend other and more formidable mountains. We therefore selected a point on a rocky ridge overlooking the (true) left bank of the Holmebugt glacier. I need not trace our route up it in any detail. It followed the ridge except where an occasional and infrequent divergence on to either face was necessary, and though now and again it gave good scrambling on steep, firm rocks, it mostly consisted of the insecure natural masonry so often found in this part of the world.

The work was easy, and Imboden was in a talkative and characteristic mood as we ascended. "There was a man in our village," he began, "who never was unkind to his wife and children, and who had not an enemy in the whole valley. One day he died—don't touch that fellow, ma'am, it's loose—and all

the neighbours said: 'He has surely gone to heaven' — Have I a little more rope, ma'am? Now you come — 'But,' I replied, 'why should he go to heaven? he has not earned it!' Then the neighbours were *fearful* shocked — Oh, dear me, ma'am, did I tread on your finger?—and said: 'Well, anyway, he will get there sooner than you.' I told them I thought not, and I said: 'See here —he will go to St Peter, and St Peter will say, "What do you want?" "I want to go to heaven." "Let us see, then. You had a little money and a bit of land when you became a man. You had a good wife. How did you leave your land and your family? You had less land and less money when you died than when you began life, and now your wife will find it hard to support the children. No, you won't do for heaven just yet." Now, when I go to St Peter, he will say: "What do you want?" "I want to go to heaven." "Let us see, then. You were not a very truthful young man, but nobody was the worse for it. You had no education and no money, yet, when you died you left

KRISTIANSON AND HIS WIFE, OUR NEIGHBOURS AT HOLMEBUGT.

To face page **144.**

your wife and children well provided for, and helped a good many poor people as well. I think I shall let you in!"' Dumkopf, Emil! You will have the whole mountain down!"

Driven in from the Arctic Ocean by a strong northerly wind were white fleecy clouds which presently filled all the valleys. Above was a clear blue sky, and during the whole of the descent a circular rainbow, of brilliant hue, lay below us on the sea of mist. Stretching out my arm and putting my four fingers closely side by side, their united breadth was just equal to the apparent diameter of the inside of the circle.

The view from the summit, however, was clear, so we at once began to fix the positions of the highest and grandest of the neighbouring peaks, and Imboden made up his mind by what routes they would or would not go. Across the glacier and just opposite to our standpoint, we saw a magnificent rocky mountain, obviously the Holmebugttind, no matter what the map might choose to call it. This we proposed ascending next by going up a promising *couloir* to a glacier

above, and then hoping for the best on the other side. Across the Andersdal was a group of bristling, riven, precipitous points, resembling the Chamonix Aiguilles. They were, we knew, the Laxelvtinder, and all except the lowest were unascended. To the north-east of these tempting summits stood a beautiful, symmetrical snow and rock peak. The snow lay at an impossible angle for prudent climbers, and the rock above was absolutely unbroken and nearly vertical. This mountain was clearly not to be meddled with, unless the other side happened to be very different. Many more mountains caught our eyes, but with a clear idea of those I have mentioned we came home well satisfied. We called our peak, in compliment to our neighbour at the farm below, the Kristianstind.

THE HOLMEBUGTTIND.

To face page 147.

CHAPTER XII

FIRST ASCENT OF THE HOLMEBUGTTIND, AND SECOND ASCENT OF THE DURMAALSTIND

On 1st July we set out at 9 P.M., in brilliant sunshine, to try and get up the great black peak which rises immediately behind Holmebugt. It had a long, broad and by no means steep snow *couloir* on its south side, coming down to just below the termination of the glacier. This *couloir* evidently led somewhere—always a fact to be thankful for on a new mountain. When we got to the top of it we hoped to find something else equally promising.

We did get to its top, and found a glacier and another *couloir* above it. Fortifying ourselves with the usual tea and bread and jam, we mounted that other *couloir*. It, too, led to a glacier, and our mountain must, we thought, be close by. The glacier turned out

to be miles in extent, a huge ice-cap, rising to form various summits, some round, some more sharply defined in outline. In fact, had we known it, we were on part of Joekkevarre. The Holmebugttind, however, seems the second highest summit of the massif, and is practically a separate mountain. We reached the snow-capped top along a snow *arête*, steepish in places, in five hours forty minutes from camp. The rock buttresses viewed from below are much lower than the actual top, and this is well seen from the opposite side of the fjord.

To the north a fine, solid-looking, snow-capped peak claimed our attention. It coincided with "Loddevarre" on the map, and at that time we were still so touchingly confident in its occasional accuracy that we began to refer to this mountain quite unhesitatingly as Loddevarre. Now thereby hangs a tale.

It was the day after our ascent of the Holmebugttind that another party hove in sight, coming up the fjord in a roomy sailing boat. This was Mr Hastings and his porter

THE ROCKS OF THE HOLMEBUGTTIND.

To face page 148.

Hohgrenning, whom he had brought with him from the south of Norway, and who were very welcome visitors to our lonely quarters. We heard each other's experiences and discussed our future plans, especially with regard to the next peak we proposed starting for. Mr Hastings told us he intended ascending the Durmaalstind. We informed him that we were bound that evening for Loddevarre.

At about 8 P.M. we set out, and skirting the fjord northwards struck up in about three-quarters of an hour through birch woods, past two shallow lakes, and across a couple of ancient moraines till we reached the river coming down from the Fugledal. This it was impossible to cross except by wading a short distance. From the further side we at once began to ascend towards a snowy basin, from which descended a waterfall, on the west face of our peak. While breakfasting not far below this basin, we noticed the other party crossing the level ground near the river, steering towards the Durmaalstind of the map. We hoped to see them again from the summit of our peak, if Loddevarre was not too

distant from their mountain. A snow *couloir* took us up a good distance with little trouble, then for a short time came loose stones and above these steep snow-slopes. Adhering in every detail to the route Imboden had decided on from below, we crossed the slopes to the north and emerged by means of a narrow gully on to an *arête*, impracticable below, but easy from this point upwards. Removing the rope, we ascended leisurely enough, and paused long at the edge of the great glacier cap, hunting for water. At last we abandoned the search till the descent, and, once more tying ourselves together, plodded up the gentle and tedious slope towards our still invisible destination.

I had more than once during the ascent told the guides that I was by no means certain as to Mr Hastings having clearly understood our plans, nor whether we had thoroughly grasped his. I was therefore less surprised than were they when the glance which disclosed the highest point showed us also two figures, one with its head under a black cloth.

"Our mistake," I said to the Imbodens, and felt glad we did not happen to be first on a

ON THE DURMAALSTIND.

To face page 150.

mountain-top for which the other party, who had had a much longer acquaintance with the district than ourselves, had set out. They ascended by a ridge north of our route, and described it as very easy and horribly stony. They proposed descending on the east side, traversing Joekkevarre, and coming down to the Andersdal. In this they eventually succeeded; and as the last part of their twenty-six hours' expedition was in fog and rain, I did not regret my decision to be satisfied with one big mountain in a day.

The Durmaalstind gives a grand view into the ice-bound Fugledal, and owing to its height —it is believed to be the second highest mountain of the district, and is over 6,000 feet above sea—commands a fine panoramic outlook in all directions. It is close to the best glacier scenery of the group.

Loddevarre was, it seemed, merely a collective name for certain glaciers in the neighbourhood of the Fugledal, so in future when we found a name on the map which had "varre" tacked on to it, we took it to mean rather a glacier system than a separate mountain.

CHAPTER XIII

SEVERAL NEW ASCENTS

THE day after our ascent of the Durmaalstind was hopelessly wet. Mr Hastings and I wiled it away by the diverse occupations of developing photographs and telling climbing stories. Indirectly connected with these were some entertaining experiences of curiously addressed letters which passed between "top mounters" and natives of Norway and elsewhere. The following seem to me worthy of note.

It happened that during the previous winter Mr Cecil Slingsby, with that thoughtful kindness which renders him everywhere so popular, wished to send a Christmas present to a man at Jaegervand whose name he did not recollect. He therefore addressed it as follows :—

THE HOLMEBUGTTIND, FROM THE DURMAALSTIND.

To face page 152.

"To the man in the red shirt who brought milk to
three Englishmen last summer,
Jaegervand,
Tromsø."

It was safely received.

A letter directed to

"H. Woolley,
Mountain Climber,
Lofoten Islands,"

duly reached its proper destination, as did another some years before for

"G. Hastings,
Mountain Climber,
Cashmere."

The bad weather persisted till the day after, when clouds obscured the peaks till the afternoon. They then began to lift sufficiently to encourage an attempt on Jaggisjokka, a sharply-pointed little peak which stands in a conspicuous position just where the upper end of the fjord forks. We set out shortly before 3 P.M., rowed to its foot, went up grass slopes where a few reindeer were met with, and emerged on a broad saddle north of the actual

peak, whence one looks down on the Laxvand. The aspect of the mountain being unpromising on that side, we skirted round its west face to the south ridge, where steep but easy rocks led to the summit in something over four hours from where we had quitted the boat. So comparatively low and so very conspicuous a peak seemed hardly likely to have remained unclimbed even in Arctic Norway, so, if a trifle disappointed, we were not much surprised to find a couple of small, ancient-looking stone men on the top.

An unpleasant row through choppy waves brought us home at 11.30 P.M., and while we eat our supper, with the hands of the clock pointing to midnight, the sun shone in brightly at the north window of our hut.

We always tried in the North to carry out a system of mountaineering which consisted in getting up as many peaks as we possibly could while fine weather lasted, in order to have something satisfactory to look back upon when it changed. This somewhat resembled overeating oneself in the midst of plenty in order to guard against possible starvation in

JAGGISJOKKA (THE SHARP PEAK TO THE LEFT), AND THE SÖRFJORD.

To face page 154.

the future, and in neither case can wholly desirable results be expected.

Driven onward by this greedy state of mind, we set out again the next evening for the Andersdal, which we proceeded to walk up in search of peaks. When we had tramped for four hours, we thought it time to look about us and decide definitely on something to ascend. We were then near the upper of the two ice-lakes, and so interesting had the scenery been that we had thus far thoroughly enjoyed our walk.

In front of us, to the east, visible from Holmebugt, was an obvious pass, flanked to the north by a magnificent and lofty cone of rock and to the south by a sharp black little peak which seemed unassailable on the side visible to us. To the north was a lower pass leading, as we correctly guessed, to the Lyngdal, and furnishing the shortest and easiest pass from the Sorfjord to the Lyngenfjord. It was crossed in 1899 by Mr Hastings and Hohgrenning. This pass was bounded on the east by the grand high mountain just mentioned, and on the west

by a square, precipitous wall of rock surmounted by a large glacier cap. To the south four mountains were in our neighbourhood. The highest and furthest was the majestic snow and rock peak noticed from the Kristianstind, and not to be attempted from any direction we had as yet seen it. Nearer was a symmetrical graceful summit which would perhaps "go" if the distorted glacier at its base could be crossed. Then came the most wildly-shattered, thin, wedge-like ridge I have ever seen, a veritable saw edge. Finally, we noticed a peak of more modest dimensions. It was the nearest of all to us. This peak we decided, in the uncertain state of the weather, to attempt.

I do not want to fill these pages with long accounts of straight-forward, uneventful climbs, so I shall say very little of our ascent of the westerly Laxelvtind. First came easy, stony rocks. Then a very steep snow-slope which brought us on to a white ridge connecting the east Laxelvtind with the wicked-looking little black peak. Then more rocks and better climbing took us to the main

arête. This we followed till a gap drove us on to the east face, which went so satisfactorily that we continued to traverse by it till nearly under the summit, when we struck straight up.

It was 11.30 P.M., and the sky was clearing. Having given full attention to the view, we gazed around for further peaks to conquer. Again and again the upstart black rock caught our eyes. "Let us go now for that thing!" was Imboden's suggestion, as he shook out the rope and proceeded to tie us up again. I agreed, and we began the descent, not, however, by the same route, but by the continuation of the backbone of the mountain to the south. It gave pleasant climbing, but we were pulled up before long by a drop. Our quickest course was now to leave the ridge entirely and steer straight to the glacier below. We rapidly descended a rocky *couloir*, in which lower down were bright patches of flowers and moss, and without trouble gained the snow, turned sharp to our left, and finally reached the knapsack left on the white ridge. Gathering up our things

and taking off the rope, we turned our faces towards our peak.

When we got near it, Imboden wished first to look at the side facing us, so we mounted steep rocks till brought to a halt by a wet and repulsive precipice. Up an overhanging chimney in this unpleasant wall, and with but indifferent hold, Imboden prepared to swarm, while I filled the air with entreaties to leave it alone, and try another side of the peak instead. My objections at length produced an effect, and, admitting that the passage was "not particularly nice," Imboden conducted us down and then skirted round the south side of the mountain till we came to a well-defined *arête*, the only one on the whole peak. Up this we commenced to ascend. For some distance the going was easy. Then the ridge shot up into the air above our heads and was broken into great insecure masses which we hardly dared to touch and yet had to pass over. For some time Emil and I were clinging to these shattered rocks, trying to keep away from Imboden's line of fire. He was moving

above us, endeavouring to ascend without disturbing anything. After a little he called to me: "It is perfectly easy, but needs the greatest care. Come up, ma'am, but don't hurry."

I began to mount.

"Not that one!" he cried, as I put the tips of my fingers very gently on a projecting stone. "You must not touch the big fellow!" he exclaimed, watching me anxiously, as I stretched a hand to get support on a great boulder to my left.

I looked down to see the line anything I let fall would take.

Emil was as far from it as our position would allow, but too near for complete safety.

"Give me a pull, Imboden," I said; "I'll try to get up without sending down anything."

He tugged with a will, and I went up, barely grazing the ridge. But even to look at some of those stones was enough, and before I joined my guide I felt a sudden weight against my shoulder, and in a moment, amidst a tremendous dust and roar, a huge rock jumped down from beside me, struck

the ridge with a loud *bang!* and dashed on to the glacier. Emil was, luckily, well out of its way, but I confess that for a few moments, until the air had cleared, I was considerably scared.

The *arete* improved before long, and without further incident we reached the hitherto untrodden summit. This is a tiny *plateau* poised on the top of extremely steep, rocky walls, and from it our attention was chiefly given to the big peak north of it, which we afterwards christened the Njalavarrenebbe. We hoped to ascend it before long by the south *arête*, the mean gradient of which, seen in profile from the Andersdal, did not appear unduly steep, but unluckily the ridge, instead of sloping evenly upward, consisted of a succession of short, level stretches followed by abrupt steps which we feared might prove impracticable. However, there seemed to be no other equally promising route. The chief drawback to the mountain in our eyes was its distance from Holmebugt. Nearly six hours including halts is needed to reach the Andersdals pass at its foot. For such a long

climb in the Alps one would sleep out, but it is difficult to transport rugs and other necessaries where no porterage is obtainable, so, except when the desired point can be reached by boat, the only way is to take things quietly and make up one's mind to a long expedition.

The descent of rotten rocks is safer than their ascent, for whoever leads can boldly dislodge the loose stones which are in his path, and he thus clears the way for his companions. Further, in descending, one is not fighting against gravity, and so is less likely to upset stones by gently leaning on them than by pulling oneself up by means of them. We got down our little peak comfortably enough, and, crossing the head of a very large glacier—the Andersdal's glacier—which drains into the Lyngenfjord, reached the Andersdal's pass. About half way down the snow-slopes on the Holmebugt side I glanced up at our last acquisition. The moment I saw its outline I had no doubt of its name, and the Sphinx it promptly became.

CHAPTER XIV

SOME MORE NEW PEAKS

THE evening of 11th July saw us off once more. There is a square rock peak at the commencement of the Andersdal which is apparently the most northerly part of the Laxelvtinder. It rather reminded me of the Tofana as seen from Cortina. I am not going to say much of its ascent, which, however, was quite a pleasant scramble. We went up chimneys and gullies and little ridges on its west face, and in rain and fog found ourselves about midnight on the north end of the summit ridge instead of at the top, as we had expected. "We can, with a little trouble, get to the highest point from here," was Imboden's reflection. "Not if I know it!" was mine. To crawl along wet rocks in a fog in order to get to a place where I could not photograph

seemed to promise poor fun. So home we went, and the very next night, in lovely weather, we were back on the Hundbjergtind enjoying the view from its highest point. A new and easy and particularly unpleasant route can be made up a *couloir* on the east side, which by-and-by, while we reclined on the top, was cleanly swept by an avalanche.

The Laxelvtinder are seen too much on end from this mountain. I do not know any view of them so imposing as that from the village of Laxelv. From there, and from Jaggisjokka, on the opposite side of the fjord, we had singled out what we believed to be the highest of these astonishing, abrupt and forbidding-looking mountains. The centre of the group is seamed on its west face by a great snow and ice *couloir*. The two peaks to north and south of this are the highest, and the peak to the south looks from below the higher of the two, but is really a trifle lower than the other.

Towards the base of this fine mountain the evening of 15th July saw us plodding. We kept diagonally across the slopes from

Hundbjerg, and rarely have I had so tedious and, owing to the loose stones, so trying a walk. Eventually halted for a meal shortly before reaching the foot of the *couloir*. After breakfast we applied ourselves to the not very pleasant task of going up it. It was broad and tall—extremely tall, about 1,800 feet, I should imagine. It was blackened here and there with fallen stones, and towards the middle it was of blue ice. We kept close under the rocks to our left. Here we were sheltered during most of the time from stones from above, and out of range of any shooting across from the other side. Climbers often forget that stones, dashing down a steep slope, often rebound *across* a *couloir*, so that a person is sometimes as likely to be hit when at the edge of a *couloir* by stones from the other side as by those coming from the rocks above him. It is for this reason that a narrow *couloir* is much more dangerous than a broad one.

We mounted steadily up good snow, and at last reached the short, stony slope below the saddle. I always find that the pace gets

very warm indeed as we approach a point from which we expect a change of outlook. I arrived panting on the pass. The view was rather a surprise. The pass, which we called the Tomas pass, gave access to a glacier, and the peaks disclosed to the north-east were a trifle puzzling. However, we expected to unravel their complications more easily from the top of the peak we were bound for, so after a brief pause we commenced the ascent of the broad and easy ridge to the south. This afforded a little amusement here and there. Once we squeezed ourselves through a veritable rock crevasse. At another point we wriggled up a diverting chimney, where elbows and shoulders were of more use than hands and feet. Finally, seven hours after quitting Holmebugt, we got to the top. It was a new ascent, but the mountain was not, as we felt assured after looking well at our neighbour beyond the pass, the highest of the Laxelvtinder. It is unquestionably the second highest, and is a noble peak, well worth ascending. We called it the Tomastind.

The highest peak could, we saw, be easily climbed from the pass, by a narrow, unsafe, but not particularly steep *couloir*. We believed there was no way up the mountain except by running considerable risk from falling stones, so we pretty well made up our minds to be generous and leave the highest point of the Laxelvtinder for others less prudent than ourselves. It was subsequently ascended by the Messrs Rawlence without guides. The weather was clear and calm; we remained an hour on the top, enjoying a magnificent view. At the culmination of a long climb in the north, if the weather was fine, we usually conversed as follows:—

"We are a long way from camp," I began.

"Yes," said Imboden, looking keenly round at the neighbouring peaks, "a *very* long way, and much of it is a tiresome walk."

"Does it not seem a pity to come so far and not do something more while we are here?" I asked, while my eyes, too, roamed from one mountain to another.

Imboden invariably agreed, and the next question was, which mountain should it be?

NJALAVARRENEBBE. SPHINX. ANDERSDALSKAR.
FROM TOMASTIND.

To face page 166.

This conversation duly took place on the summit of the Tomastind, and resulted in our selecting a high but easy peak which seemed as if it ought to overlook the Andersdal. We were still rather confused by the maze of peaks in that direction, and wondered whether, on gaining the summit of the mountain in question, we should, directly we obtained a look down the other side, recognise it as an old friend.

Descending to the pass, we deposited everything in the way of luggage we had with us there, except the camera, and set forth over an undulating, snow-covered glacier. The glaciers in this part of the world differ from those in the Alps in several respects. Where, on a comparatively level snow-field in Switzerland transverse crevasses only may be expected, here occasional longitudinal ones occur as well. Thus greater precautions are needed. The leader must move slowly and sound frequently with his axe. The rope must be long and be kept perfectly taut.

As the pages of this book may perhaps be turned over by the non-climber as well as by

the mountaineer, a few words, which the latter can skip, may not seem out of place to the former, who possibly does not quite understand the characteristics of a glacier.

Above a certain height from sea-level, which differs according to the geographical position of different ranges of mountains, in bad weather rain hardly ever falls, the only moisture that descends being in the form of snow. This buries the tops of the flatter mountains, and accumulates in *plateaux* and hollows to a depth sometimes of hundreds of feet. "Why, then, do not the mountains grow higher?" I am occasionally asked.

Because three factors combine to yearly remove about the same amount of snow which has fallen within that time. These are: evaporation, avalanches and glaciers. The dry snow of the upper regions, pressed together by its weight, and tending by force of gravity to slip down slowly in a compact mass wherever it rests on a sloping bed, gradually passes from snow into ice. A lump of snow grasped tightly in the hand changes in a few seconds into an icy ball. The pressure and warmth have done

the work quickly when the quantity of material has been small. But nature, working on a gigantic scale, takes longer. In a year or two the snow of the upper regions has begun to change. It is more compact. A few years more and the substance is transparent, and full of crystals, the "glacier corn" first described by Professor Heim. Yet a little longer and the glacier has groped its way down towards the valleys, below the snow-line, and is one huge, dripping icicle, broken up by great cracks where its bed is steep and the tension has been unequal, frozen together again where it is level, moving faster in the centre than where retarded at the sides by its banks, and at last reaching the point where the waste from the thousand rivulets which course over and scar its face exceeds the supply. A big stream leaps out at its termination, and amidst a chaos of stones and earth which the glacier has accumulated from the rain-swept slopes that overhang its sides, it comes to an end.

A fairly good idea of the average pace of a steep glacier may be obtained by bearing in mind that the body of Captain Arkwright,

killed by an avalanche in 1866 on Mont Blanc, took thirty-one years to descend about 9,000 feet in the ice. We may also recollect that a slow-moving glacier moves at about the same pace as the hour hand of a watch.

The heaps of rubbish piled up along a glacier are called moraines. Every glacier has one on each side, and many have medial moraines as well, formed where two glaciers further up have united and combined their side moraines. A glacier free from snow presents no dangers to a skilled climber. But above the snow-line, where its crevasses are hidden, it requires the greatest care. This is why the rope is used, for if three men, tied together at distances of 20 feet, are crossing a glacier, and the snow which bridges a hidden crevasse gives way under the weight of one of the party, the two others, supposing the rope was tight at the time, should be able to pull him out.

The glacier between us and our new peak was carefully crossed, a steep snow-slope ascended to some broken and easy rocks, and then the killing "curiosity" pace was put on in its most aggravated form. I was every bit as

anxious as was Imboden to know where on earth we were about to emerge, but up to the very last moment we went up with our chests to the rock, and there was nothing to be seen except the face of the mountain. Gasping for breath, we at length, when close to the top, got our heads over. "Well, where are we?" we cried, but directly after we simultaneously perceived which peak we were on. Hurrah! It was the big rock and snow mountain which stands up so grandly above the Andersdal. It had no name, and was not in the neighbourhood of any river or farm after which we could call it, so I felt justified in calling it the Imbodentind. The rocky walls supporting its ice-cap, and themselves rising from extremely abrupt snow-slopes, were most imposing from their smoothness and steepness. They formed what one does not see every day on a mountain, the veritable precipice as depicted by illustrators of weekly papers—in fact, a precipice as sheer as the side of a house.

It was hot as we sat on the top, but away to the south-west loomed gloomy clouds, and

as it was very desirable to be out of the *couloir* before being overtaken by a storm, we soon hurried off towards the pass, and before long were making our way with as much rapidity as was consistent with safe-going down the snowy gully. About a third of the distance from the top is that part of the *couloir* where falling stones are most likely to be met with. Just as we reached it, a sudden gust of wind heralded the approaching tempest, and, before three minutes had passed, it broke furiously over us. The howling wind, the rattling hailstones, the thick fog, changed the whole aspect of the place, and we increased our speed to its utmost limits. Luckily not a stone came down while we were in this trying situation, and as we gained the safer slopes below the storm cleared off, and for the first time we opened our lips to remark on the surprising inopportuneness of its appearance.

From the foot of the *couloir* we descended straight down steep wooded slopes to the valley, and came home by a useful little path which skirted the fjord at some height above it. This route would, had we known it, have

been far better for the ascent than the one we took. The heat was very great, and the mosquitoes abnormally active.

The author of "Feats on the Fjords" has stated in that pleasant little work that there is never any thunder within the Arctic Circle. Storms accompanied by thunder and lightning are certainly very rare in the Far North, but, when they do occur, their violence is remarkable. While resting in my tent that afternoon the most terrific thunderstorm I ever experienced took place. For more than twenty minutes thunder rolled and clashed incessantly; before one roll had ended another commenced. This I never heard before, though I have been in many violent storms in the high Alps. Soon rain began to pour down, and then the mountains started their cannonade. Never have I heard such an appalling din as the roar of the great boulders, which dashed down the slopes and flung themselves on the stony *débris* below. It was an emphatic warning to give their haunts a wide berth for some time after, till Nature had settled down again into a gentler mood.

The shatters of boulders on the mountain sides of this northern land are on a far grander scale than anything I have seen in Switzerland, and point to a period of extraordinary disturbance at some remote age when these narrow valleys were carved out, and frost and tempest flung into them huge cubes of rock from the peaks that must then have shot upwards in mighty spires far above their present limitations.

IMBODENTIND. STOR LAXVANDTIND.
FROM BALKISVARRE.

To face page 175.

CHAPTER XV

THE FIRST ASCENTS OF BALKISVARRENEBBE AND BALKISVARRE, AND THE ARRIVAL OF FRIENDS

THE time was now drawing near for the arrival of two young friends from England. Claude and Leonard Rawlence had never visited the north of Norway before. The former hoped to get some fishing and an occasional long walk. The latter is the keenest climber I have ever met. He will gladly go up anything, in any weather and under any conditions, or, in default of a mountain, will disport himself by the hour on slippery boulders till hardly an inch of whole skin is left on his fingers or a thread of his garments hangs together. This young enthusiast hoped to join a member of the Alpine Club whom we expected later on for some mountaineering. We could not take

him on our rope, as our party of three was as large as safety would permit on these rotten peaks.

But first we accomplished a couple more mountains, Balkisvarrenebbe and Balkisvarre —both high and flat-topped, and both supported by grand, precipitous walls of rock. Walking for an hour up the right side of the Andersdal, we approached a tall boulder with an osprey's nest on its pointed summit. Turning up to our left, we reached in about three hours from camp the foot of a glacier coming down between the two peaks we afterwards ascended. This glacier was rather steep, and had an ice-fall about half way up. By some process of reasoning which I am unable to explain, Imboden made out that there must be a shelf along the rocks overlooking it on its (true) right side, and that by means of this we should be able to avoid cutting our way through the *séracs*. To my eyes the cliffs looked unbroken, but, sure of his ledge, Imboden soon quitted the glacier and commenced to mount a *couloir*. This, after a little, we left at a point where the rocks

were less steep and smooth than below, and, sure enough, in a very few minutes we emerged on a veritable "cornice road" which, gently sloping upwards, took us without the slightest trouble to the less crevassed snow-slopes above. The cliffs at the head of the glacier were seamed by a thread of snow, and following this we gained stony slopes which led to the saddle between the two mountains. On the other side the slope was almost sheer, but with care in moving and selecting just the best spot it would have been possible to go down it to the Lyngdal. Immediately opposite to us, across a narrow valley set with gem-like green lakes, rose the magnificent mountain I referred to when describing our ascent of the Sphinx. Imboden had a good look at it, and saw no reason to change his opinion that the south *arête* would probably be the best route by which to ascend it.

Balkisvarrenebbe appeared so easy that we left the rope on the saddle and strolled along the ridge without it. Further on the broad *arête* merged into an ice dome, and crossing

over to get a good view into the Andersdal we again came on stones. The *coup d'œil* of the valley beneath is sensational, and gives the impression that anything thrown from the top of the rocks would strike the centre of the lower ice-lake. Close to my standpoint the cliff overhung in grotesque shapes, and the bare sight of it was enough to make one's flesh creep — for I have to confess that a first-class precipice never fails to produce an impression on me, which the phrase "to make one's blood run cold" not inaptly describes. Mine ran cold enough to make a retrograde movement pleasant.

Returning to the saddle, we set out for the other and higher peak. It lay to the north, and was reached in about three-quarters of an hour, without the slightest difficulty, over gently undulating snow-fields. This mountain had appeared to us, when seen from the Imbodentind, to be a portion of Joekkevarre; but now it was clear that this was not so, for between it and that glacier-clad group is a stony pass, giving access from the Andersdal to the Lyngdal. Immediately on

JOEKKEVARRE. AN UNEXPLORED PASS. FROM BALKISVARRENEBBE. BALKISVARRE.

To face page 178.

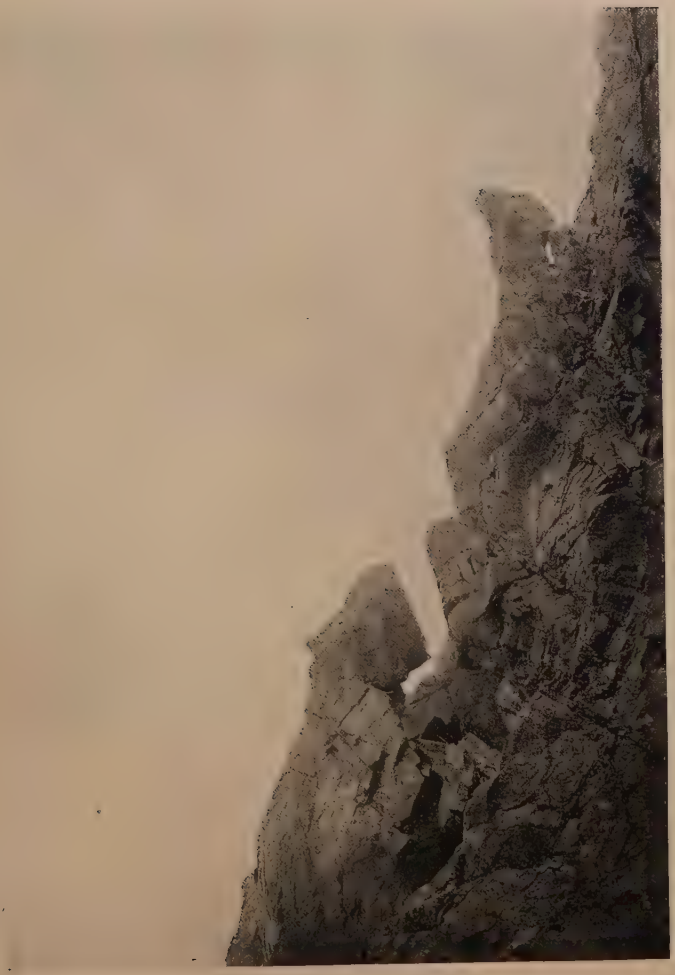
the opposite side of the narrow valley on the Lyngen side of the watershed, the huge glaciers of Joekkevarre hang over precipitous rocky slopes. The pass above referred to has never, we believe, been crossed, nor was its existence even suspected.

In magnificent weather we leisurely retraced our footsteps from Balkisvarre, and after a long rest on a patch of bright green grass below the termination of the glacier, at length regained Holmebugt.

The next evening — 19th July — after we had retired to rest, the thud! thud! thud! of a steamer was heard, and this turned out to be my two friends. They had hired a small launch at Tromsø, and after several times asking the way and once landing them at the wrong place, the men in charge had finally brought them safely to Holmebugt about midnight. Soon two more green tents were added to the encampment, and the "camaraden," as the natives termed my friends and my guides indiscriminately, settled down to five weeks of the very worst weather I have ever seen. But first came one really fine day. They seized it

for a fishing expedition to the Laxelv, whose name led them to expect something better than the wretchedly poor sport they obtained, while we set out for the tall mountain at the head of the Andersdal. We went first to the Andersdal's pass, and, including a halt of three-quarters of an hour, this preliminary stroll took us just six hours. We then had another meal, and left all luggage except the camera, taking chocolate and oranges in our pockets.

The ridge commences directly the pass is quitted. For a short distance we traversed its east side, but soon got on to its crest. Here the going was good, and occasionally short passages afforded some scrambling. We rose steadily. After an hour and a half the *arête* appeared to shoot up in more than one formidable step. We were still, however, able to keep on or very close to the now narrow ridge, till a wall, vertical and of the most unstable rock imaginable, forced us to traverse on to the east face. This traverse was unpleasant by reason of the looseness of the rock and the steepness of the gradient, but



A BIT OF THE RIDGE OF NJALAVARRENEBBE.

To face page 180.

the passage was a short one, and the rest of the ascent was comparatively easy. It took us two hours and three-quarters from the pass to the top.

The actual summit of Njalavarrenebbe is the highest point of a ridge which runs, roughly, north and south, and the view includes a portion of the Lyngenfjord, near Dalen. The entire mountain is on the Lyngen side of the watershed. The glacier which fills up the valley to the east is very large, and its ice-fall appears formidable.

Imboden prowled about for some time, and then announced that we were to descend straight down the east face to the glacier, taking advantage of *couloirs* the upper ends only of which could he see. So we kept northwards for a little along the *arête* and then began to go down. At first the face was extremely steep, and we descended some slabby rocks which were rather awkward for the last man. After a time, however, we were able to get into a *couloir*, and, as the snow was excellent, rapid progress was made. We had to change into another *couloir* before we got

down the mountain, and here, too, things went well, so in less than a couple of hours from the top we reached the *plateau* of the glacier below and were soon back on the pass, in the welcome neighbourhood of a good luncheon on a "colation froid tiré des sacs," as the programme of an outing under the auspices of the French Alpine Club has it.

For five weeks afterwards the rain it rained every day, and a considerable amount of snow fell on the mountains. Avalanches of stones poured down the *couloirs*, and occasionally huge boulders fell with a crash like thunder, awakening us from sleep at night. I had ample occupation: cooking, mending the garments of the party, developing photographs, reading and writing. Besides, I had the recollection of a dozen successful climbs during the three previous weeks.

But for my two friends the continued bad weather was deplorable, and I can only say that they bore it with the utmost fortitude. Now and then, clothed in mackintoshes, they pursued wild-duck in a boat, while Imboden and Emil, from another craft, endeavoured to

NJALAVARRENEBBE, FROM THE EASTERN LAXVANDTIND.

To face page 182.

cut off the retreat of the quarry. Usually they came back with nothing, and reported the whole proceeding as having been a wild-goose chase. Sometimes, in a fair interval between storms, we fished in the fjord, and generally managed to obtain enough for our larder.

The system of fishing in vogue here appears very primitive to a stranger. A large double hook without bait projects from a shining tin imitation minnow. The line being weighted, it is dropped to the bottom and then raised till the hook is just off the bottom. The line is now sharply pulled up a yard or so, then quietly let back the same amount, and so on. The result is that the fish are hooked anywhere, and it is surprising what large catches are sometimes made in this way.

Now and then shoals of big *sei* visit the fjord, in pursuit of herring fry. The natives catch them as I have described, but they bait their hooks with tiny fish, and just before dropping them they scatter a few little fish in the water to attract their greedy pursuers.

The fish we usually caught were cod, whiting

and an occasional red mullet. They averaged a pound or two, the heaviest we ever caught being a cod which weighed 18 lbs.

In a villainous mixture of Norwegian, German and English, with a Lappish word thrown in here and there, we conversed with Kristianson and his wife while loafing near the house, waiting for the commencement of the next shower. There are two phrases which can usually be uttered with good effect. They are, "Who stole the till?" which conveys "How are you?" to the native mind, and "Smoky piggy," which is the proper thing to say when you see a pretty girl. A native, on his part, usually starts the conversation by enquiring how old you are, and continues it by asking the price of anything you possess which happens to take his fancy.

CHAPTER XVI

MORE FRIENDS ARRIVE, AND WE ACCOMPLISH SOME CLIMBING UNDER UNPLEASANT CONDITIONS

On 5th August, about dinner-time, there was excitement in our camp, for the smoke of a steamer was seen as she rounded the islands, and we knew she carried two more friends. It was a calm, rainless evening as we paddled out to her over the glassy water, and we began to hope that she brought us fine weather in addition to friends and stores. Messrs Foster and Strutt had hired their queer craft at Tromsø, and intended using her as head-quarters for fishing and climbing.

The next morning the weather looked as bad as ever, so we employed the day in an excursion to the Laxvand by steamer, where the sport was poor, not to say non-existent. I prophesied sunshine for the day after, in

defiance of barometer, precedent and common-sense, but the situation began to look desperate, for I could not but feel that it was owing to my accounts of the charms of the north that my four countrymen had tried it. A gleam or two of sunshine cheered us all the following morning, and soon after breakfast we were ready to set out in various directions.

Mr Foster started for a lake where he expected trout fishing. Messrs Strutt and C. and L. Rawlence prepared to go up the Holmebugt glacier and try an ascent at its head; and my guides and I took the boat and, rowing across the bay, left her high and dry on the beach till our return. We then struck up through woods of silver birch towards the Fugledal. It was more than a fortnight since we had started on an expedition, and already the flowers which were then in bloom had faded and were replaced by other kinds, the berries which were hardly formed were now almost ripe, the undergrowth of fern had reached its state of greatest luxuriance, so quickly does all plant life spring up under the rays of sun night and day.

THE HEAD OF THE FUGLEDAL.

To face page 187.

Snow lay to within 2,500 feet of sea-level, and a short distance higher up the clouds raced past and seemed to forbid our approaching the tops of the mountains. In about an hour and a half from Holmebugt we reached the entrance to the Fugledal. Already we had begun to look about for a shelter, and soon came on a great boulder admirably adapted to our purpose. Rain had begun to fall, and our prospects of going any further seemed poor.

The sight of the valley, or rather what the seething mist allowed us to see of it, excited my keenest curiosity and admiration. It is the finest thing of the sort we have met with in that part of the world, or, indeed, anywhere else. Imagine a narrow valley, filled in at its head by a huge glacier whose ice-cliffs rise a hundred feet or more above a large green lake, and drop great blocks into the water, which float away as miniature icebergs. Over this lake fly hundreds of sea-gulls, whose nests are in the steep green buttresses above. All round the valley black walls of rock support enormous snow-fields which discharge shattered masses of ice in hanging glaciers wherever

there is a rift in the cliffs. Not a tree, hardly a blade of grass, is to be seen. The floor of the valley is composed of smooth, glacier-polished rocks, making a level surface, excellent to walk over.

The rain pattered steadily on while we sat under that boulder and ate our lunch. Imboden declared that unless the weather mended we must go home. I agreed, but in the bottom of our hearts neither of us intended to do any such thing.

There was a steep little peak, detached from the Durmaalstind and separated from it by a glacier, which kept almost clear of mist. This was obviously the thing to go for, if we went for anything at all in such weather. A trifling abatement in the rain was made an excuse for a start, and, crossing the stream without difficulty, we began to ascend the slopes on the other (true right) side, putting our best feet forward. The mode of advance consisted in dashing up at the top of our speed till we reached a projecting rock, and then sheltering under it to regain our breath. In this way we exposed ourselves to the wet for the

shortest possible space of time. We advanced, but every moment I feared Imboden would give the word to retreat. He, it afterwards appeared, expected the suggestion to come from me, so the result was that we progressed rapidly, and the weather was not alluded to by so much as a whisper. I had always the hope that if we only kept going the time would come when Imboden would observe: "Well, we can't possibly get wetter, and as we are such a long way up we may as well go on as far as it is safe," so the obvious plan was to walk fast and say nothing.

After about two and a half hours we rounded a corner and emerged on the *arête*. Here a howling wind tried to snatch us from the crest of the ridge, and struck us with so icy a blast that we pulled our collars round our ears and took our gloves from our pockets and pressed on as fast as we could up firm, good rocks. Before long a pointed top with a considerable drop beyond was under our feet. This was the summit. The mist, lifting for a moment, disclosed the position of our little peak, isolated sufficiently from the ponderous mass of the

Durmaalstind to give it identity. Its obvious name is the Fugledalstind, and so we called it on the spot.

A stone man was hastily constructed, and then we began the descent by a rather different way, somewhat more to the east, where large patches of snow made the going quicker. Gaining the valley near the lake, we crossed just below it, where its waters disappear amongst stones, to emerge further down in a torrent of considerable volume. A wet walk to Holmebugt brought our expedition to a close at 9.30 P.M.

The other party had returned an hour or so earlier, having gone up the Holmebugt glacier and from the first *plateau* ascended, not without difficulty, a very steep snow-slope to the foot of the higher of two conspicuous rock pinnacles seen from Holmebugt. Passing behind, they reached the gap between them and followed the sharp *arête* to the top. This peak, like ours, had previously been unascended.

The little steamboat was short of coal, so the next day our friends set off for Tromsø.

The weather was so awful that the boat could not make headway. They therefore anchored at Gjovik, and, returning to Holmebugt for stores, left by the mail steamer the following day. There is an extraordinary tidal race in the narrow straits between the Ulfsfjord and the Sörfjord, and entering them with the incoming tide against a strong wind they had a very unpleasant quarter of an hour.

Sunday, 13th August, was hailed by us with joy as a doubtful day, and as there really did seem some chance of its being tolerably fine, we embarked in our little boat at 12.30 P.M., Emil rowing across the bay. Our idea was to skirt the east slopes of the Durmaalstind and try and find a big peak we had seen from it to the north. No sooner had we crossed the Fugledal river than Imboden and I commenced a lengthy argument as to the precise locality of the peak.

"I think we can see part of the *arête* from here," I said, pointing with my axe to a rock ridge beyond the respectable but dull *arête* Mr Hastings had adopted in his ascent of the Durmaalstind.

Imboden shook his head.

"No, ma'am; that is part of the mountain we met Mr Hastings on," he replied, with that oblivion of names of which he positively boasts.

I disagreed—I always do—and we plodded on for a bit.

Presently Imboden stopped dead.

"It is quite possible you are right," he observed, after a good look through the high-power telescope which had cost him two marks when he purchased it at Hamburg the previous month.

By this time I had changed my mind.

"No, Imboden," I declared; "we shall not go there—it is only a buttress."

"I think you're wrong, ma'am; and if we go beyond we must walk hours and hours."

I put my head down, prepared stubbornly to walk "hours and hours." After a good portion of this somewhat indefinite time had passed, a wondrously quaint and sharp little peak glided into view.

"The Aiguille du Dru," was Imboden's comment.

"And the Aiguille Verte," I added, as a higher and finer rocky mountain placed itself beside the first; "and, Imboden, you were right after all in what you said, though you did not keep to it."

"Well, ma'am, I said otherwise afterwards just to please you," was his very serviceable reply.

We kept on over stone-strewn slopes and at last gained the mouth of a short valley filled with a huge moraine and a very small glacier. The dimensions of the former gave promise of something particularly choice in the way of loose rocks. We had made up our minds that the little peak would "go," but now that we were close to it, it appeared somewhat insignificant, perhaps because, to use a paradox, we could not see it. Its big brother, however, tempted us to try and get up him. Imboden believed the ascent to be easy enough except the last two or three hundred feet. After that, he tranquilly observed he thought it was "a divil." Where he annexed this word with its Irish pronunciation, I cannot say. I am so used to it, that it

has taken its place in my mind with other classical expressions, and I know just what to expect from a peak thus described.

The first part of the ascent was steep but easy. The last portion of the climb quite bore out Imboden's opinion. I believe that had there been no fresh snow the scrambling would have been simple enough. As it was, the white covering was quite unlike anything I have ever seen in Switzerland. The warm, damp sea air had allowed the snow to bind itself together in huge cushions on the slabs and to project in great cornices. From it hung fringes of icicles. Even where the rock was vertical, it was thickly plastered with snow. Thus the general aspect of the upper part of our mountain resembled a very steep ice-fall covered with fresh snow, and was not at all like a rock peak. There was a thick white mist which discouraged me from attempting a photograph of the extraordinary scene — an omission I have since deeply regretted.

We had to move with great care. Probing the snow to find out whether there was rock

or atmosphere beneath, we reached the foot of a steep chimney. There was practically no hold, and it was only by shoving up Emil till the damp snow above gave him something to stand on that we managed to surmount this first obstacle. As soon as we were all grouped together on a ledge of insignificant dimensions, Imboden went ahead. The yielding snow rendered the work heavy, and, alas! his trouble was all for nothing. Simultaneous with my cry, "You have only a yard more rope!" came his disappointed exclamation, "We have simply to go down!"

We *did* go down, but not far. Presently Imboden noticed a steep slope which, if crossed, led apparently to easier ground. He declared — and I never question his opinion on this subject, for his knowledge of the conditions of snow is said to be unique — that there was not the slightest danger of avalanches, so we made the traverse, up to our knees the while. Then we had to surmount a steep slope which led us to the backbone of the mountain, here a sharp *arête*; and turning to our right we followed

it without further trouble to the top, arriving there at 8.30 P.M.

Where were we? The mist still hung round us, and, save a rocky wall plunging down, down, all round into space, nothing could be seen. It was obviously not the peak we had originally set out for, because that had a glacier cap. It was a question we could not decide on the spot, so we waited till we saw the peak from another mountain, whence we discovered its position with regard to the rest of the chain. It turned out to be the Lerbugttind.

Of the descent I have nothing to record. The rain kept off till we neared the Fugledal river. Then a heavy shower commenced, so we sheltered under a boulder, and made a great fire. At 3 A.M. Holmebugt was regained.

MR. E. L. STRUTT DISCUSSES HIS PROJECTED CLIMB, AND IMBODEN POINTS OUT THE WAY TO THE GLACIER.

CHAPTER XVII

A CLIMB IN A FOG

THE following chapter has kindly been written for me by a friend, Mr E. L. Strutt. I have thought that it would add to the interest of the book were it to contain an account of the life and climbing in the Far North by another pen than mine, and I therefore pressed Mr Strutt to jot down some of his recollections, in spite of his protest that he could describe nothing worthy of note. I do not at all agree with him, and the freshness of his description has brought back vividly to my mind the memory of my own time in the Land of the Midnight Sun.

"It was the middle of July," writes Mr Strutt, "when with a friend I left England, and, travelling *viâ* Newcastle and the Norwegian line of steamers, duly reached Bergen after a

tempestuous passage. At Bergen we had to wait two days for the northern mail steamer, and I, at any rate, found the temperature after the summer Salisbury Plain manœuvres exceedingly trying. We took nearly a whole day transporting our luggage and stores—my friend and I had taken a small river near Tromsø for fishing—from the hotel to the boat, one of the most arduous feats we accomplished in Norway, as the dilatoriness of Norwegian officials is simply maddening. However, eventually we left Bergen, and, after a beautiful passage, reached Tromsø in about three days. Here, for a ridiculously small sum, we secured the charter of the steam launch *Sandvicken*, a venerable and unseaworthy craft which on more than one occasion nearly proved our grave. We left the same day for our river — the Lysboten — but on arrival found it in great spate, and much too discoloured, owing to a landslip in one of its parent lakes, for fishing. So, having wasted two days, we set out for the Ulfsfjord.

"After coaling at Tromsø, we left for the north, and soon ran into a heavy gale. The

Sandvicken now began to labour heavily, and the hatches leaked through the loamings to such an extent that we were obliged to take refuge and anchor, under the lee of a small island, in a roadstead that was quite open to the south. It blew hard from the north till about midnight, when the wind at first abated, and then, suddenly veering to the south, increased so much that we began to drag our anchor. The intelligent crew had all but let out the furnaces, and as we were not a hundred yards from the shore, disaster in the shape of loss of life, or at the least a thorough wetting and the loss of boat and baggage, stared us in the face. However, J. K. F. rose to the occasion, and whilst I paid out rather more cable to ease the straining vessel, he proceeded with blows and abuse, much aided by our Norwegian servant, to arouse the sleeping crew.

"Eventually, when the boat was being swept from end to end by the fortunately small breakers, enough steam was got up to enable us, after slipping the cable, to move slowly and painfully out. After making a sufficient

offing, there was nothing for it but to heave the old tub to, and wait for the weather to moderate, as we were now without our only anchor. By eight in the morning the wind had blown itself out, and a downpour of rain took its place, so, steaming in again, and by means of the dinghy and much exertion and groping with grapnels, the cable and anchor were recovered.

"We then again proceeded to the Ulfsfjord, but, with a very strong tide against us, we did not reach Holmebugt—which is situated near the north end of the fjord—till 7 P.M., the green Whymper tents of Mrs Le Blond's party being conspicuous for at least two hours before we reached the anchorage.

"On arrival we met with a warm reception, and I was at once invited by Messrs Claude and Leonard Rawlence to take part in the first ascent of a mountain called the Hansen-tind, a sharply-pointed peak that lies high up on the west side of the Holmebugt glacier. The weather was vile, a regular Scotch mist obscuring everything, but Leonard assured me that he knew exactly where the peak was,

AN OSPREY'S NEST ON A BOULDER IN THE ANDERSDAL.

THE "SANDVICKEN" AT HOLMEBUGT.

To face page 200.

and that we should get up all right. In the morning it had cleared a little, but everything above 4,000 feet was obscured by mist. I rather hesitated to try the climb, but Joseph Imboden, Mrs Le Blond's well-known St Nicholas guide, strongly advised us to start at any rate; and accordingly, amid the jeers of J. K. F., who never walks when he can do anything else, we left the shore about 10.30 A.M.

"Accustomed only to Alpine travel, I could not at first understand the radical change in the hour of departure; but when one remembers that in these parts during the summer months there is no night at all, it becomes obvious that any part of the day or night is the same, as far as the condition of the snow is concerned.

"We first forced our way through thick and wet juniper scrub, then over a small moraine to the extreme snout of the Holmebugt glacier, which comes down to within a few hundred feet of the water's edge. After much step-cutting in hardish ice, we got on to the level but still dry part of the glacier above. Looking up, it suddenly struck me that I did not

at all care for the appearance of the work overhead. Our peak was still hidden in mist, and I was told that we must try and climb through the centre of the very steep ice-fall which rose in front. Fortunately the ice was rough and gritty, and many steps were not necessary, as the glacier was so broken up by incipient *couloirs* and small transverse crevasses that it resembled in many ways a gigantic staircase. Leonard directed me with great topographical skill, bidding me bear always right-handed, so as to avoid keeping near a 'hot plate,' which was apt to sweep the left-hand portion of the ice-fall with stones and other mountain rubbish. Steeper and steeper became the ice, the steps could no longer be scamped, and soon we were compelled to put on the rope.

"I have no record of the time we took in this most tiresome ice-fall, but to the leader, who had not the faintest idea where he was, the work was both irksome and uninteresting. After some considerable interval of time I suddenly heard a voice out of the fog which now enveloped us, exclaim: 'Look on your

right: there is the snow *couloir* which we must climb!'

"Glancing upwards, the scene as the fog lifted a little was dramatic. A huge, slabby precipice rose vertically, seamed straight down its centre by a steep snow *couloir*, and cut off by a *Bergschrund* from the ice on which we stood. The snow was set at an angle of fully 45° to 50°, and high up looked still steeper through the mist. It is safe to say that in the Alps in such weather the ascent would have been far too dangerous to attempt.

"Advancing a few steps, it at once became evident that in this extraordinary country and climate the ascent of the *couloir* was not only safe but even easy. Shouting to the others to come up, we lunched in a small lateral crevasse blocked with a big rock which sheltered us from the damp; and after a short halt I started up the *couloir*, kicking steps in the firm but not too hard snow. The angle steadily increased, but a few blows from a stout boot sufficed to make a reliable foothold, and in about an hour we reached

an *arête* which abutted on our left against a vertical rock tower.

"'That is the summit!' exclaimed Leonard. The peak was obviously impregnable to direct assault, but after a little search we found a sort of fault on the east face of the tower, which enabled us to turn the difficulty and regain our *arête* on the other side of the peak. From here a series of easy rock *couloirs* and ledges led us in a few minutes to the summit of the Hansentind.

"It was 3.30 P.M., and the day had cleared sufficiently for us to be certain that we had reached the top of the mountain we had set out to climb, and this reflected the highest credit on the bump of locality and mountaineering knowledge of my companions. The actual summit of the peak afforded neither space nor material for the erection of a cairn, and the only token of our presence we were able to leave was an empty meat tin.

"After a quarter of an hour's halt we set out homewards in ever-thickening weather. I have a vivid recollection of the descent of the great snow *couloir*, where nothing was

THE CAMP AT HOLMEBUGT.

To face page 205.

visible below me except a few feet of damp rope, five or six steps, and on each side the slopes of steep *névé* seeming to go down into a black abyss. I could hear the spectral voices of my companions: Leonard encouraging his brother to descend confidently a slope that to a beginner must have been exceedingly trying, and then their united cheery tones bidding me descend in my turn, and so on and on over the *Bergschrund.* At the foot of the *couloir* and down the steep ice pitches, with many a deviation we reached the level glacier and comparative daylight again below the mists.

"At last, wet and bedraggled, we arrived at Holmebugt at 7 P.M. We shouted for J. K. F., and presently he rowed ashore in the dinghy and transferred the party to the delights of the *Sandvicken's* leaky saloon and an excellent dinner.

"My recollection of this and of another climb a few days later in which we made the first passage of an interesting *col* called the Laxelvskar, and when, but for my lack of perseverance in the dreadful weather, we should

undoubtedly have made the first ascent of the Stor Laxelvtind—which ascent my companions accomplished from the south-east a few days later—are that the peaks themselves are far more arduous than their actual heights warrant. In the cases where no glaciers are available to serve as causeways to the upper world, climbers have a considerable struggle on the lower slopes with dense juniper and rhododendron scrub, and the glaciers themselves are steep and dry to a considerable elevation, causing one to begin the actual climb with the feeling that much labour has already been accomplished, and that far more than is really the case lies ahead.

"The scenery, as I have viewed it from the fjords, is magnificent; but whenever I attempted to reach any height it was concealed by rain, clouds or dense masses of vapour. An exceptional day, however, rewarded us on a mountain near Tromsø, and the view proved one of those which it will always prove impossible to forget.

"After my few ascents we returned to our river, where fair sport awaited us."

LAXELVTINDER, FROM SOMMERBUGTTIND.

To face page 207.

CHAPTER XVIII

OUR LAST CLIMBS IN THE NORTH

August 15th could boast of several hours of lovely weather. During them Mr Claude Rawlence and my two guides managed to get up no fewer than four new peaks on the west side of the fjord. Being anxious to get a good view of the Joekkevarre group, I followed his tracks a few days later on the most conspicuous of these peaks. Of course the weather looked most unpromising, but anything was better than the continual inactivity.

The time had now come when the nights were too dark for climbing. The obvious alternative would seem to be an early start. But getting up early is detestable to me, and I am thankful to say it is equally odious to Imboden. He therefore suggested our starting about 6 p.m., walking for three hours, and then, choosing a sheltered spot, passing the

time till daybreak by a big fire. The plan worked admirably. Our landlord's son rowed us across the fjord, and from there, skirting the water for some time, we made for a valley between the green hill seen from Holmebugt and a stony height beyond crowned by a huge stone man, and from its builder known to us as "Mr Hastings' mountain."

This valley completely differed from those to the east of the fjord. It was grassy and stoneless. The plants were different, too. But of chief importance to us was the surprising and delightful fact that the valley contained an excellent path. At one point the river had to be crossed, and here we found a bridge. It was merely a few rotten tree trunks with twigs laced in and out between them. Still, it was a bridge, and, as such, unique in the district. It is inexplicable how seldom the peasants take the trouble to add to their convenience by the construction of even the most primitive of bridges; neither do they often attempt to enhance the value of their land by drainage or irrigation.

We duly found a desirable *gîte*, made our

fire, had our dinner, and I, for one, went to sleep. Around us hung a wet mist, but I had seen blue through it and the wind was from the north, so, in spite of Imboden's prophecies for a bad day, I stoutly asserted that if he would find his way up something I would guarantee a view.

I must say it needed all the strength of an opinion founded on reason to hope for the best, as we rose up and up through a drenching fog. Emil was of opinion that his father had missed the way. Imboden was certain of his direction. These differences of opinion led to prolonged jabberings in *patois* in which "mein Chatzi" and "Na!" figured prominently. I can always get much entertainment from their conversations. The delightful inaccuracies of a *patois* are something to wonder at. Never "What time is it?" but instead, "Wie spat (with a very long *a*) hast du?" And while a peasant of culture will ask for "anker" at breakfast when he wants butter, one in a lower social grade will shock him by describing it with the equivalent of "grease."

At last Imboden bent down and examined the ground, and then, smiting it with the point of his axe, called on Emil to come and testify to his tracks of some days ago. Sure enough, he had hit off the ridge in exactly the right place. As we moved up it, the summit seen for a moment through a veil of mist shone in the sun. I looked at Imboden. He shrugged his shoulders. The mist was getting worse, he thought. We kept on, and very soon our heads went through the fog and we seemed to awake in a new world. Close at hand every crag, covered with dewdrops, glistened in the brilliant sunshine. Around us solemn giants in white lifted their hoary shoulders above the sea of cloud. Overhead, a deep blue sky vaulted the wonderful scene.

I spent a very happy hour on the top, enjoying a grand view both towards Joekkevarre and also towards the Laxelvtinder. Nearer to us were several fine peaks, and these I hoped we might perhaps some day see closer still.

We made a fairly direct descent to a valley

JAEGERVAND GROUP. KJOSTINDER. LEHRBUGTTIND.

FROM THE SOMMERBUGTTIND.

To face page 210.

enclosing a little glacier-fed lake, and passed many small tarns on our way down to the valley beyond. When at length we reached the border of the fjord opposite Holmebugt, Emil exclaimed: "There is the steamer!" and, sure enough, the *Sandvicken* lay anchored in the little bay.

But it was still a far cry — literally — to Holmebugt. We had arranged with a young peasant that he should fetch us when we whistled. How on earth he was to hear us unless the wind happened to be in exactly the right direction was a matter Imboden refused to discuss. But evidently his *clairvoyance* had not been at fault, for in a very few minutes we could see a boat putting out and coming towards us.

We had a most unpleasant row in a very choppy sea across and found the camp deserted, the rest of the party having set out that morning for a climb. They came back late in the evening, having crossed a steep pass between the highest and the most northerly of the Laxelvtinder.

Our summer in Norway was drawing to a

close. We had but one more opportunity for an ascent, and it was not easy to decide what to do. I wished to go once more to the Fugledal, which had laid hold of my imagination in a way I could not forget. I rather thought we might do Joekkevarre from there—a noble mountain and worth walking across, no matter how many had preceded us. Imboden fancied it lay rather too far back—"hours and hours" away, in fact. So we started on the 20th, and spent some time by a huge fire in the wood near the Fugledal river, setting off upward with the dawn.

The sun was just touching with pink the snowy ramparts of the valley as we gained the narrow entrance. We skirted the ice-lake and came in sight of a grand glacier which streamed down from the north. To the east of it the upper snows were connected with the lower world by a series of jaggled rock pinnacles. Imboden looked hard at them.

"I wonder very much what is behind!" he said, after a long scrutiny.

Now Imboden is nearly always right if it comes to a difference of opinion between us

LOOKING INTO THE FUGLEDAL.

To face page 212.

as to the location of any particular mountain. However, thanks to the many photographs I take, and to my habit of developing them at once, I am sometimes more familiar than he is with a peak under some special aspect, so when my guide turned enquiringly to me after the above exclamation I promptly replied: "Joekkevarre!"

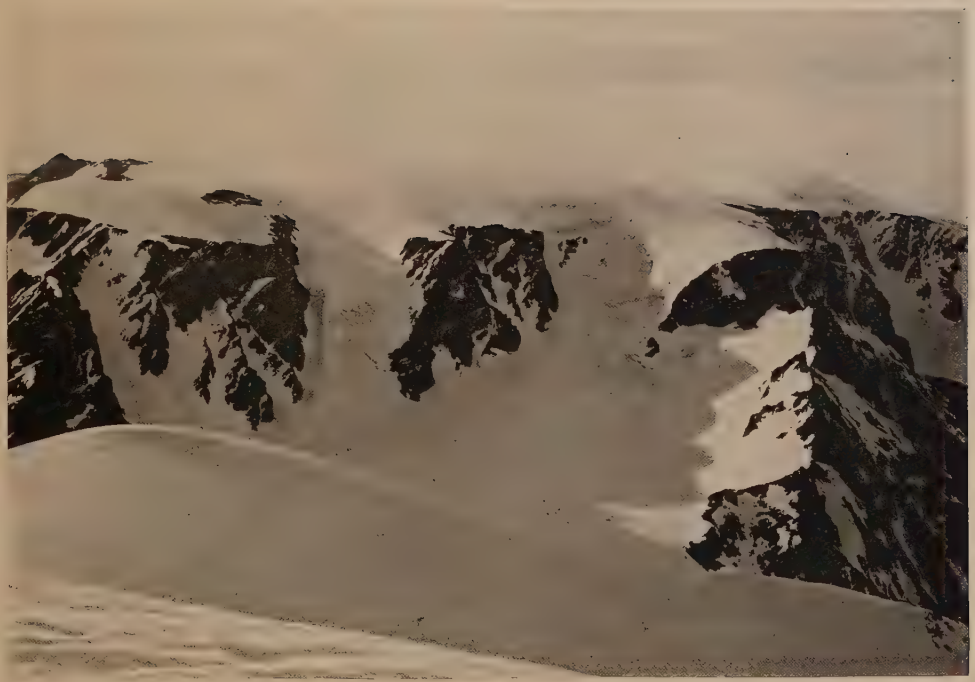
"If it is, we shall go there," said he; "and if not, we shall go there, too."

It was a grind up stony slopes to the level of the ice-fall, but we were interested and surprised to find in the soft earth tracks of two people, wearing nailed boots, who had obviously descended that way some weeks previously. Further up we saw their tracks on the snow. Whose could they have been? It is perfectly possible to see tracks on snow weeks and even months after the tracks have been made, and in spite of the snow which may have fallen in the meanwhile. I have frequently seen tracks in January which were made in September, and any guide who is used to winter climbing will corroborate what I say. Indeed, unless

there has been drift, it is obvious that this must be so.

The snow on the *plateau* of the glacier was in very bad order, and we moved slowly across it, with the rope tightly stretched. Beyond it we were able to ascend over stones, and these brought us to the level of the top of the glacier, round whose head some fine peaks are grouped. Here the snow was perfect, but the weather, as usual, had left the paths of virtue, and mist considerably hampered our view.

Imboden decided to go up an arm of glacier which appeared to give easy access to the upper snow-fields, and once on them, we knew we could walk for miles without let or hindrance. We made for the slope in question, and though we got up we had some trouble with crevasses. In the centre was a *Bergschrund*, not in its normal position, but standing on its head in accordance with the curious habits of *Schrunds* in this country. Above it were two more, this time properly placed transversely. We did not find it very easy to cross one of these, and I remember Emil



JOEKKEVARRE.

To face page 215.

remarking that I left portions of the skin of my knuckles on the upper edge, so tidy and methodical has he become under my teaching. At last a chocolate-eating halt was called, and after that the slope eased off till we could before long advance without step-cutting.

We steered for a conspicuous hump straight ahead, and getting on to it found ourselves on the watershed between the Sörfjord and the Kjosenfjord. A sharp, black peak at once caught our eyes. This was Joekkevarrenebbe. It was not far off, and I hoped Imboden would consent to try it. He eagerly took up the idea and thought it might go all right.

But first for Joekkevarre. Looking round, we saw various snow humps. To the south-east was the one Mr Hastings had pointed out to us from Durmaalstind as probably the highest. We decided to do it, and tramped off in a biting wind but a clear atmosphere towards it. It is not, however, the highest. That distinction belongs to the peak east of the Holmebugttind. When on the summit of the peak we had chosen, the

Holmebugttind, the peak to the east of it, another between that and ours, and also the Durmaalstind, all appeared higher than our standpoint. But where none are difficult of access, the question is not very interesting.

We remained there long enough to photograph, and then we directed our steps towards the rock peak, singularly like the Crast' Agüzza in the Engadine as seen from the *plateau* above the Labyrinth. It was joined to the main mass of Joekkevarre by a broad and stony ridge. This narrowed near the base of the mountain, which presently shot up in a fine pinnacle. There were a couple of passages affording gymnastics, which were pleasant after our long snow grind, and then we reached the tiny but eminently satisfactory top. A really magnificent precipice, rising from a barren valley below, supported the peak on the Gjovik side. We also had an excellent view of the mountains between us and the Kjosenfjord.

We found an easy *couloir* from the snowfields to the head of the glacier, and diverged a little to look through Mr Slingsby's Fornoesdals pass. This grand portal opens on another world

THE FORNOESDALSKAR.

To face page 216.

of beauty, and we would have much liked to go down the glacier towards Gjovik.

"Let us do it, ma'am," was Imboden's suggestion.

"Not for worlds in this get-up," I replied, "and without luggage of any kind. How *can* you, Imboden!"

"To be sure, ma'am; I didn't think," he said, handing me half a chocolate. "We will go home the way we came."

The pass is defended on the Fugledal side by a curious wall of snow, described by Mr Slingsby in his account of his passage. It is about 60 feet high, and I cannot say how it has been caused, though it looks like the result of a strong wind swirling round and sweeping clear the bases of the rocks. We walked out of this trench at its western extremity, and then had a tedious grind over soft snow, amidst hidden crevasses, down the glacier. Rain began when we got to the valley, and fell off and on till we reached Holmebugt at 6.30 P.M.

At midnight the brothers Rawlence came in. They had accomplished a fine ascent: nothing less than that of the highest of the Laxelvtinder.

They had mounted our *couloir* — which was in atrocious condition—as far as the saddle. They had then gone up the little *couloir* we had described to them, and, helped by the recent snow, found it safe enough. This led them without difficulty nearly to the summit, the ascent being finished by a short scramble up a rock ridge. I was delighted at their success, especially coming as it did after such a disappointing spell of hopelessly bad weather. The next day we left Holmebugt for Lyngseidet.

A large new hotel had already risen over the ashes of the old house, and I do not doubt that in future Lyngseidet will be a popular resort.

A long journey *viâ* Tromsø, Trondhjem, Stockholm and Copenhagen brought me home.

THE HOME OF THE BROWN TROUT.

To face page 218.

CHAPTER XIX

A HOLIDAY GROUND FOR NON-CLIMBERS

But it was not only as a climber that I visited our northern playground. During three more summers my husband and I, with our native maiden Hildur to cook for us, had an excellent time camping by those northern fjords and lakes. Friends at home and acquaintances *en route* asked us what river we had rented, and if there was a lodge, or a series of lodges; and, seeing that a gun-case formed part of our baggage, they desired to know if our moor gave good sport. But no moor or river bound us in costly chains to any particular district. We set out determined on the simple life, and we certainly had it in all its simplicity. For where we went there we might fish as we chose, shoot where we chose, and camp where we chose, and none except an occasional Lapp or two honoured us with a visit.

And those many miles of wild yet safe and restful country are open to-day to whoever cares to do as we did. A little foresight in arranging for food, a boat always at hand to facilitate movement, a gun and a fishing-rod, a pair of top-boots, sleeping bags and a few cooking utensils, and the equipment is sufficiently complete. True, we had tents in addition, but these had been necessary when climbing, and we had left them at Lyngen. We could, however, have managed with the haymakers' huts which here and there will be found; and for a small consideration their owners are glad to forego their use during the very short time they generally occupy them.

But two people supplied with an army bell tent and a small Rippingill stove can be independent of all other shelter, and may dump themselves and their belongings where-ever they like.

The sport will be second-rate, of course, but the freedom of the life will make up for much.

A real holiday should not be intruded on

by the necessity for rising at any special hour, eating at any particular time, or going to bed except when inclined. But only in a land where for a couple of months day and night differ but little from each other is such a holiday possible.

As for game, wild-duck abound near the water, snipe are numerous in the marshes, rype (a sort of grouse) are found on the hill-sides, and ptarmigan above the tree-line.

Every stream is full of brown trout, and in the mouths of rivers and tidal pools fine salmon trout are to be had in plenty if the right moment is chosen for their capture and suitable flies offered to them. A fluffy, fat, brownish fly, purchased at Tromsø, proved particularly deadly, and for the streams we used a small Zulu early in the season, and other little English flies later on.

Some of the mountain lakes are positively overstocked with trout. Gently drop a fly over the glassy surface, and even as it falls the water is churned up by innumerable fins, and leaping silver bodies dart towards the desired morsel, disputing with each other for

the right to seize the deadly bait. Such fishing gives little sport, except at moments of great hunger, when provisions have failed to reach camp perhaps for the second consecutive week. Rather do I prefer the little boulder-strewn rivers, where deep green pools need some wariness in casting, and where from the troubled waters beneath cascades a half-pounder could often be lured.

To me there is far more pleasure in starting off with a rod in my hand, a fishing bag on my back, and some sandwiches in my pocket to wander all day by an endlessly varying stream, than to sit in a boat kept by a sturdy rower at a given point in a large and swift river, when with cramped limbs and unchanging outlook I await the big fish that so seldom troubles to look at my fly.

Some of our fishing days were marked by little incidents sufficient to give the desired amount of variety. It was our custom to go by boat—a matter of twenty minutes' row or ten minutes' sail, if the wind was favourable—to the river; and as for some little way up it was navigable, we were able to leave the boat

NEAR THE MOUTH OF OUR LITTLE RIVER.

To face page 222.

against the bank, simply tying her to a tree. The mouth of the river was partly blocked by a bar, and one had to know the channel, but, of course, this was very soon quite familiar to us.

On one occasion, to our great surprise, we saw a couple of haymakers on the shore by the river, the only time we met any one except an occasional Lapp so far from the village. We were sailing up from our camp with a beautiful wind, and as I held the cord of the sail, ready to drop it at the word of command, Aubrey steered with an oar for the gap in the bar. The peasants saw us coming, and ran excitedly to watch what was going to happen next. Their own boat was outside, on the shore of the lake, for it evidently had not occurred to them to try and get in. We advanced at a good pace, and as it became evident to them that we were making straight for the centre of the river, their interest in our proceedings visibly increased. I don't know whether they hoped we should get through, or would have contemplated with satisfaction the spectacle of strange English

people ignominiously stuck on a sandbank, but I think their kindly feelings were dominant. They were obviously surprised when we glided easily in and took up our accustomed anchorage by the bank on the other side of the stream.

We usually carried each his bag and rod and strolled up the river independently of each other. There was no need to arrange who should have first turn at any special pool. The pools were numerous, and when one of us arrived and found the other engrossed by the attractions of a pool, he merely passed on himself to the next.

The stream was charmingly varied. At some places it spread out and rippled musically, bright as crystal, over a pebbly bed. At others it came down in foaming cascades, one below another, interspersed with ledges that sufficed as a ladder for the fish to ascend. Every now and then the water rested in a deep pool, hollowed, it seemed, out of the rock, and varying from pale transparency in the shallows to dark-green velvet in the depths. Such pools were infinitely delightful. We generally got

the best fish out of them, and the boulders that fringed them formed good cover as we crept along behind them. Sometimes these pools, instead of offering a smooth, unruffled surface, were rippled over by the splash of waterfalls that descended into them. These were, of course, more easily fished, as one could stand boldly on the edge and cast close up to the falling water.

I recollect just such a pool which was a special favourite of mine. I was in the habit of putting one foot on a tiny ledge of rock near the water, with the other a trifle higher up, and throwing a fly into a most inviting little bit of stillish water on the other side and across the base of the waterfall. Intent on making my first cast in the pool that day an accurate one, I stepped down too hastily to my accustomed ledge, missed it, and slid on into the water. My rod was in my right hand, but with the instinct of the climber with his ice-axe, I did but grasp it the more tightly; and as I slipped over the rock, I got a firm hold with the fingers of my left hand on the ledge where my foot should have remained.

I now found myself in the clear, green water up to my shoulders, my feet either on the bottom or on a stone that rose above the general level, and, so long as I did not move, quite firmly placed. The rod was my problem, however. There was nowhere to put it down, and without the use of both my hands I could not drag myself up the rocks. To add to my difficulties my fishing bag had instantly filled with water, and at the slightest upward movement it felt heavy as lead on my shoulders.

Aubrey, I knew, was below me somewhere on the stream, and must in time pass my way. I did not like to shout if I could help it, as it would be alarming, but it was undesirable to prolong the position indefinitely. I was just debating with myself what I should do when my husband suddenly appeared round the corner. The occupation of a pool he doubtless intended to explore by a fish of such considerable bulk gave him a very evident start, and a glance at the expression on his face when first he caught sight of me totally upset my gravity, and very nearly proved too much for my bodily equilibrium as well.

Directly he had relieved me of the rod I was able to make my position still more secure, and presently he contrived to get hold of the strap of my fishing bag and thus relieve the weight that held me down. This unlucky mischance put an end to that day's excursion, and in my dripping garments I kept up a steady run till we had regained the boat.

Another day we followed the river up to the mountain lake under the Isskartind where it takes its rise. To say we followed it is inaccurate, however. It has so many turns and meanderings that to actually follow it would involve three or four hours' walk. So we forsook it and struck upwards through the thin birch woods and above the tree-line, and enjoyed a glorious view from the slopes of short grass high above our usual fishing ground.

After a couple of hours we reached the margin of a considerable sheet of water. On the side we stood it was shallow, but when we had gained the opposite shore we had beneath us dark green depths. The whole of that bank of the lake consisted of a great

shatter of boulders from the mountain above, so that both above and below the water the angle was extremely steep, and nearly every step we made along it involved scrambling.

The situation was truly a fascinating one, and before proceeding to fish we settled ourselves on the warm, sun-lit rocks, had our lunch, and enjoyed the scenery. Far below we could see our favourite stream taking its course at the bottom of the valley and opening out into the Jaegervand, blue under the blue sky. A narrow strip of sea to our left and another to our right were visible, and beyond them groups of snow-capped or rock-pinnacled mountains and glittering glaciers sweeping between. No mosquitoes troubled us at that height, and we sat peacefully on till the green depths at our feet at length tempted us to serious business.

I made my way for a little distance over the steep shore, and then I dropped a fly to the water beneath. So eagerly did the guileless little trout take it, that I soon tired of the sport and wondered how my husband was getting on. A low cry from his direction

NATIVE FISHERMEN BY THE TIDAL LAKE AT JAEGERVAND.

To face page 228.

called me towards him, and as I approached, he whispered: "A big one, and just the one day we haven't a landing net!"

It certainly was most annoying. The light trout rod was bending under an unusual weight, and to land a heavy fish on that precipitous rocky bank without a net would have been absolutely impossible.

We hastily formed plans, and it was resolved that we should try and land him at the end of the lake, where a little grass-bordered creek might permit of our gently drawing him to shore. But it was a long way off, over difficult ground, and meanwhile the tension of the line had to be steadily kept up. Neither of us could have managed the business alone, but with proper generalship we hoped to accomplish it together. In several places we needed both hands for climbing. Here one of us went ahead, took up a secure position, and the rod was handed up. Passing it from one to the other when necessary, we made steady, if slow, progress, and at last, to our relief, with the fish still on, we neared the end of the boulders.

Aubrey now reeled in some line, and, stepping back on the grass, steadily worked the fish towards shore. I went near the water's edge to be ready if needed, and in breathless excitement we watched the ruffling of the water and the occasional shimmer of silver. Finally the critical moment came. With one swift pull through the last yard or two of water the fish leaped upon the bank. I rushed forward, but already, he was off the hook and swiftly heading for his home. I seized him in my hands. With the utmost ease he slipped through. It flashed across me that I had a woollen glove in my pocket. In an instant it was on and the fish firmly grasped.

Truly, he had led us a dance, but no doubt we valued him all the more at the time. Later on, when we got him home, we were less elated, for I can safely affirm that of all the fish that at different times stood between us and semi-starvation, he was the frailest barrier. It would have needed a Norwegian cow to enjoy him, and I am not sure that we even went so far as to put him on the table. At any rate, I cannot but think

A BIT OF OUR STREAM.

To face page 231.

that the little fish remaining in the lake must have rejoiced at his departure.

Our stream had one or two tiny tributaries, and I was tempted to follow one of these for quite a long distance. It was the quaintest place imaginable to go fishing, and the surroundings were enchanting. The rivulet ran along at the bottom of a clearly-cut trench with bright green turf on its borders, and beautiful ferns bending over its surface here and there. It seemed to me absurd to expect a fish, but I shortened my line till only a foot or two dangled from the point of the rod, and then I dropped a fly into the narrow opening. Immediately after I felt a sharp tug, and striking at once I pulled out a trout of surprising dimensions for so small a home.

I continued my way up the little stream, pausing here and there, and scarcely ever making a fruitless cast, and at last I came to a spot that surely must be near the dwelling of the fairies. The sparkling, silver water dropped from a rocky channel into a shell-shaped basin, just like one of those beautiful wall fountains one sometimes sees in old

Italian gardens. A notch in its edge served as the outlet for its contents, which fell like a rope of crystal to a still, green pool below. It was a place to admire, to sit and read by, to leave undisturbed. Yet from mere idle curiosity I flicked up a fly into the basin above me, and at once it was seized and worried. A sweep of the rod landed a fish on the soft grassy slope at the side, and the trout that I took off the hook was of not too contemptible a size. A couple more were shortly after yielded up by the fountain before I turned and went down again to the main stream.

A certain pool on our river was known to us as the Looking Glass Pool. It was shallow on the only side from which it could be fished, and it was extraordinarily transparent. It was just possible to cast into it from the foot of a little rapid below, but on the whole it was the most awkward pool to fish on the whole river. In it lived one fat trout, of superior cunning, not to be deceived by any tactics we could adopt. Day after day we dropped tempting flies before him. He wriggled to

their vicinity, looked wisely at them, and with a flick of his tail disappeared under the bank. All the summer through we tried to secure that trout; and though we never failed to see him, he still remained in his pool at the end of the season. Then we left, and emboldened by our absence he must have grown more daring, for the year after, at the very first cast, he seized the little Zulu and was added to our bag.

Somehow that pool had lost a portion of its attraction for us when he was gone. Other and smaller and simpler trout there were in it, but we missed our old friend, and regretted his untimely enterprise.

CHAPTER XX

SOME MINOR ADVENTURES

It is not always on the more serious expeditions that people get into trouble, and while my series of ascents in this region went through with a freedom from adventure infinitely creditable to Imboden, my own attempts at personally conducting a too-confiding husband over untracked country were hardly so successful.

There was a certain rocky peak of not unimposing appearance in the neighbourhood of one of our sea-side camping grounds. It promised a fine view, and the walk thither did not seem likely to be unduly difficult. So we set off for it, taking a knapsack with lunch, and our axes in our hands, but we did not think it necessary to carry a rope.

For a considerable distance the going was quite easy, and we rose fast; but after we

had duly paused for food and began to enter on a wilder region, the general slope of the hillside increased, till at last we had to pick our way up rocky ground set at quite a considerable angle. Still we progressed steadily enough, and before long we saw the summit ridge not far above us. Thus far we had been on a face from which nothing in the shape of a precipice was visible, but all at once I came to the edge of the world, and, crawling close up to it, looked below at seething white mist. I was hastily bidden to move back, for my quicker-eyed companion had noticed that the place we were on projected like the top of a mantelpiece and was hollowed out beneath. It was a strangely uncanny place to find oneself all in a moment upon, and we did not again venture so near the edge.

As we retired to more substantial footing we came on patches of snow, and across these we saw the track of an animal. I fancied it might be the track of a bear, but we came to the conclusion that it was too small. Furthermore, bears are never met with, so the people told us, in that district. They

prefer the regions of dense forests, and further south, where pine woods abound, they are not uncommon.

Some years before Imboden was invited by a keen sportsman to go bear-hunting. They walked many miles, ascended over particularly unpleasant ground, and finally awaited the bear at the mouth of a ravine through which, if he happened to be there, he could be driven towards them. I forget if beaters had gone ahead, or if the bear was merely of an obliging disposition, but I know that when, after all their labour and fatigue, it became evident that the animal—a speck in the distance and leisurely advancing—must pass well within range, they simultaneously shouldered their rifles and took to their heels, and thus ended the first and last bear-hunt Imboden ever assisted at.

The tracks that puzzled us were undoubtedly those of a glutton, an animal not infrequently shot in that part of the world, and valued on account of its fine skin. We never saw one alive, however.

We arrived a few minutes later on the shattered summit of the peak, and debated as

IMBODEN IS FIRST ON THE TOP.

THE USUAL TYPE OF VEHICLE MET WITH. IMBODEN HAS TO DRIVE HIMSELF.

To face page 236.

to whether we could find a more interesting way down than that we had chosen for the ascent. On one side of us was a high-lying, open valley with a snowy floor, hidden every now and then by mist. On another was a narrow gorge with steep green sides, and in front lay the fjord. We decided on the snowy valley, and began to make our way towards it, but the fog was so thick and persistent that we could not in the least see where we were going, and after a little time we thought it prudent to turn in our tracks and remount to the top once more. We did so, and thence steered down towards the gorge. But steep and dry grass slopes have to be tackled with care; and after clinging to them with our axe heads like flies on a window pane, and becoming more and more uncertain of what awaited us further down, we abandoned the search for novelty and climbed up again, rejoining our old track a little later.

On another occasion, enraged by the non-appearance of any food whatever by the weekly steamer, we determined to journey to the nearest telephone, and into it speak our minds.

The distance was considerable, and we duly, and, as we thought, sufficiently provisioned ourselves for the expedition and set out.

After some hours of what I considered very creditable steering we emerged at the mouth of a valley and saw the shining waves of a fjord before us. This we knew we had to cross, and with unwise haste we enquired from the first person we met if a boat could be obtained. She professed herself ready to provide one; and a few minutes later, accompanied by another woman, commenced pulling and pushing a most unattractive vessel across the waste of seaweed that intervened between us and open water. It seemed a matter of total indifference to both of them whether they slipped knee-deep between the brown boulders or not, but to me dry boots counted for something, so I went in bare feet and carried my boots and stockings in my hand.

Not until the boat swayed and rocked against the last stones did we perceive its amphibious nature, for after a long residence on land it was now evidently only waiting for deep water to go to the bottom. The two

PULLING UP OUR BOAT.

To face page 238.

women, of course, did not care. As no one can swim and the craft invariably leak, it is only thanks to a kindly Providence that death by drowning is not more frequent. Therefore it is just as well to let faith be complete. But we did not share this touching confidence, and promptly returned landwards. A seaworthy boat was at last forthcoming, and in due course we were ferried across and found our way to the long-sought telephone.

In a short time the culprit at the other end was hanging on our words. They were the words any ordinary Briton would probably use after having been deprived, by the carelessness of the man at the receiver, of bread and meat for a fortnight. We spoke our minds, and awaited his apologies. But even the most peremptory "Are you there?" failed to bring a response, and we were left wondering at what stage of the proceedings we had been switched off!

It was not in the pleasantest frame of mind that we found ourselves again upon the water, but we still had enough vitality to agree that a more interesting route home than the one

we came by might be found. We certainly succeeded in so far as variety was concerned, and before very long we realised that we were in for a very lively time indeed.

My general idea of where we were and where we were aiming for was right enough. It was in the details that the *mis-en-scène* was not quite what I had counted on. It became absolutely necessary to cross a deep and fast-flowing mountain torrent. We searched in every direction for practicable stepping stones or a ford. At last a long and narrow bit of board flung across the river unexpectedly came in sight. It was neither firm nor level, and the milky racing stream below made my head turn.

Aubrey took it at a run, and I would have been wiser had I shown equal confidence. But the light was waning (for it was getting late in the season), and I was tired and hungry, and utterly without pluck. So I began to wriggle across as best I could, steadying myself now and then with my axe. I progressed slowly, and with a hideous want of grace elected to take the bridge

backwards. It seemed to have no end, and as I now entered upon its lowest portion, my toes began to be caught by the hurrying water. "How much further?" I shrieked questioningly, amidst the deafening roar of the torrent; and to Aubrey, misunderstanding, it came as "I can't hold on any more." He dashed in the water above his top-boots, hauled me over the last bit of slimy board, and scrambled up beside me on the bank. As he lifted each leg in turn, great streams gushed out from his boots, and for the rest of the way the stockings within were sodden.

But home was not for us yet. In the dim, bewildering light we had still to try many a track that led nowhere, and feel our way out of bogs unending. We had been on our feet for something like fourteen hours, going fairly fast most of the time, so it is no wonder that when a silver ribbon disclosed itself and marked the spot from whence but a short row would take us to camp, we hailed it with delight, distant though it still was.

Gradually over the rough, pathless slopes

we drew down to it. A boat, more luxurious to our tired limbs than ever appeared the most palatial liner, should be nestling under the bank. In the weird and uncertain light we could not see her, and our spirits sank with every step we advanced. If she were gone, there was nothing for it but to ascend the river to a point where we could cross, and gain our camp by a long tramp over bogs and through woods—a far from pleasant prospect. But presently the high wooden prow appeared out of the rushes, and, pulling her by the rope which attached her to a tree close by, we climbed on board with infinite content.

A few strokes took us down the river, and out over the bar into the lake. We both pulled steadily along the wooded shore, and as we turned the last little promontory beheld a light in the door of a tiny shanty, and an agitated figure running down to the water's edge at the splash of our oars. Hildur was meditating the organisation of a search party, but her journey to the haunts of mankind through bog and forest would

have almost needed a rescue party all to herself, so the poor girl was torn by indecision as hour after hour passed, and still our boat tarried. She assisted in heaving it up into a secure spot, and then turned her attention to the preparation of a truly magnificent supper out of next to nothing.

Duck shooting was the most exciting of our sports. There was one spot on the edge of a vast fjord that penetrated far inland, from which with proper management one need never return with an empty bag. But it needed infinite wiliness. The sportsman had to move from cover to cover, along steep rocks overhanging the sea, without disturbing a single one of the multitude of loose stones he had to pass over. My task was to keep inland at first, and then, near a point agreed upon, to creep out to the water's edge and drive the birds back towards the advancing gun. They often dropped into the sea, and I had then to remain and watch their position through my glasses, while Aubrey returned to camp for the boat. They proved excellent eating, and

were a welcome change from fish and the unpalatable strongly-flavoured native mutton.

One of the small excitements of our life in camp was the arrival of our mail and stores twice a week. Sometimes we rowed down to fetch them, and sometimes Abrahamson (Mr Slingsby's "man in the red shirt") brought them to us by boat.

I shall never forget one occasion when we set out for the village. There was a stiff wind, and for some time we scooted along before it, the sail as usual merely held by me, and Aubrey steering. We kept fairly near the bank, which rose steeply and thickly-wooded all along that side of the lake. We were not very far from the village when we saw some haymakers at work near the water. They stopped to watch us, and well they might, for at that moment Aubrey turned to look behind, and behold! a violent squall was all but upon us. It had churned up the lake till it seemed a veritable wall of water that was advancing, and he instantly called to me to drop the sail. I had barely done so when the tempest was upon us, and with a bare

mast we literally flew before the wind. This state of things fortunately did not last long, and when we turned the corner near the end of the lake, we regained less broken water. We were in a boat intended rather for the sea than for a lake, with high prow and stern, so, at any rate, our craft was fitted for bad weather; but a sudden squall is never a pleasant experience, and we were glad when we returned a couple of hours later to find that the wind had completely dropped.

Our good friend Abrahamson was quite a character. He enjoyed his little expeditions to our camp, especially on Saturdays, when Aubrey always presented him with a cigar. Once, when the box was handed to him and he saw it contained but two, he refused to take one, and was not satisfied till my husband had made it quite clear, by showing him another box, that his stock was ample for himself.

The "man in the red shirt" must have a copy of this book, with the passage I have just written, marked, and then I hope it will be clearer to him than we could make it, how much his courtesy was appreciated.

CHAPTER XXI

THE OTHER SIDE OF CAMP LIFE

The pleasure we derived from the pursuit of our food was not always entirely on our side. Sometimes it happened that we ourselves were the quarry, and never sportsmen pursued big game more relentlessly than did the mosquito hordes wage war on my unlucky husband.

During certain seasons these pests are abnormally active, and after being almost free from them during the three summers given up to climbing, they made up for the respite by their amazing activity the last two years we camped in the north. They came round me in clouds, and I used literally to wipe them off my hands in scores, but their stings annoyed me very little. Not so Aubrey, who was tortured almost beyond endurance by their onslaughts.

DR. NORMAN COLLIE TAKES CHARGE OF THE BAGGAGE.

A SNAP-SHOT AT MIDNIGHT.

To face page 246.

One evening in particular I remember how intolerable they were. We were giving a dinner party in the bell tent, and our guests, Dr Norman Collie and Mr Hermann Woolley, had contributed an excellent course of fish cooked by the latter in his best style. We were fully prepared to thoroughly enjoy the unusually sumptuous banquet, and had been at table but a little time when my husband declared himself unable to sit still and disappeared with Mr Woolley, who kindly offered a remedy. Had the bites been on his hands and face it would have been bad enough, but the stings had penetrated through the thickest shooting stockings, and from knee to ankle not a square inch was exempt.

After this experience we tried every remedy that experience could suggest. Some were almost as unpleasant as the mosquitoes themselves, but not one was of the slightest use. The only way to ensure peace was to completely cover the whole body, wearing leather gaiters and gloves and a gauze veil. Very few mosquitoes were seen during the coldest half of the twenty-four hours; and if a strong

wind got up they all disappeared, but returned the moment it dropped. One would imagine that in so thinly populated a country, the sting of the mosquito would be less poisonous than in cities such as Seville and Venice, and in my case it has always proved so. But the experience of others is different, and a few days after our dinner party, Mr Woolley's hand became so swollen — I do not suggest that the dinner had anything to do with it!—that he had to consult a doctor at Tromsø. Even the reindeer suffer much at times; and when the insects are particularly troublesome, the Lapps keep their herds high up on the slopes of the mountains. Mosquitoes are always much more numerous near lakes and rivers than by the sea.

In most mountainous countries the eagle is not uncommon. But nowhere have I seen it so frequently and in such large quantities as in our northern playground.

On one occasion we had something very like an adventure with a pair of these birds. We had wandered into a very wild, rocky spot overlooking the end of a large glacier, and were hunting about amongst the boulders for

the best way by which to descend to the glacier. But a thick white fog had crept up, and began to wrap us round and cut us off from the lower world. We were standing undecided on a slab of glacier-polished rock, our ice-axes in our hands, when suddenly out of the mist overhead sounded a horrible shriek, and as we gazed fascinated upwards we saw a couple of magnificent eagles circling round just above us. One blow from their mighty wings would have sent either of us rolling down the mountain side, and we felt sure we must have aroused their fury by unknowingly approaching their nest. I confess that at the moment I did not realise that we were in any danger, and stooping down for a stone I launched it at the great birds. This seemed to anger them yet more, and as they wheeled lower still, uttering shrieks of rage, we instinctively prepared to defend ourselves with our axes. It was useless to search further for a way down to the glacier in the mist, so we hastily turned back and quitted our unpleasant neighbours as quickly as we could, dropping before long below the fog-line.

A year or so later, when turning over a mass of mountaineering literature at the British Museum, I came on more than one well-authenticated tale of adventures with eagles, and these brought vividly before me our experience in Lapland. I have retold these exciting narratives in a recently published work.[1]

On one occasion we saw as many as twenty-two eagles all at one time. It was when we were leaving a camp at Holmebugt, and had been totally forgotten by the steamer we had told to call for us. We awaited it upon the beach, our impedimenta heaped up around us ready for embarkation. In due course we saw the fjord boat slipping along the opposite bank four or five miles away, and counted on her presently crossing over. But the captain had been changed at the last moment, and his successor had never received our message, so, having made his call at the tiny hamlet *vis-à-vis*, he turned round and steamed off. Our places were taken on the Wilson liner

[1] "Adventures on the Roof of the World": a companion volume to my "True Tales of Mountain Adventure."

sailing a week later, and no other steamer would visit the fjord till then.

A week's journey lay between us and Trondhjem, so we were much annoyed. We determined, however, to journey to Lyngseidet by some means, and began to look about for a sailing boat. We found one at last after a long row, and had a quite protracted piece of bargaining with her owners, who only came to terms when we declared our readiness to remain where we were a week longer sooner than be swindled. This is only worth mention from the extreme rarity of such an occurrence in that part of the world, where the most scrupulous honesty and fair dealing nearly always prevail.

The fjord was like glass, and we got along very slowly with a big sail flapping overhead and the long heavy oars in use from time to time. The Sörfjord empties itself into the Kjosenfjord through a narrow neck of water, and in certain states of the tide this race is far from pleasant. We struck it at the best hour, however, and our clumsy, lumbering craft kept her bows steadily pointed the way she should go all through. The water surged around in

little whirlpools, and we ran out gently on the current till we emerged in the open, tranquil water beyond. It was when off the trim homestead of Goevik that we noticed what I can only describe as a flock of eagles. They circled about in pairs, and from time to time approached comparatively near to us. We could hear their harsh, unpleasant cries, and the men in charge of the boat told us it was not unusual to see so many there.

The changes of weather, as I have said before, are extraordinarily rapid on these fjords and lakes. It was now nearly midnight, but as light as day, and the water till then had been like a mill pond. All at once, however, a strong breeze arose, and we scudded along under our big sail at a great rate. This did not last long, however, and the wind, strengthening to a gale, suddenly veered right against us. Down came the sail, and out came the long sweeps, and we toiled at them, making but little progress. An hour or more passed, and we did not seem to have moved at all. A change of tactics was evidently indicated, and we turned her bows to the land. When

we reached it and found a possible spot to disembark, we all stepped ashore, save the owner, who remained on board to steer; and then, with the aid of a tow-rope, we took it in turn, four at a time, to drag her along in the teeth of the gale.

The work could scarcely have been more trying. The ground was covered with loose stones, and bushes grew down to the water's edge. Through them we had to force our way as best we could, and if for an instant the pull on the rope ceased, the boat began to drift backwards. A little further inland there was a rough track, but close to the water it was otherwise; and as I stumbled along, now giving a hand with the rope, now having quite enough to do to push my way through the bushes, I looked back to the one or two occasions when I had considered it quite a hardship to return from a climb on the bank of that fjord rather than by boat.

At last—it must have been about 5 A.M.—we drew near to Kjosen, and were able to tie up the boat in the shelter of the bay while we put a plank across and unloaded her. When

all was on shore and the men paid off, they hoisted their sail, and pushing off they seemed but a moment later a mere speck in the distance. Our labours were now at an end, and we had merely to walk a few miles on a good road to Lyngen, and send a cart from there for our belongings. We sailed by a south-going steamer the same evening, with the inevitable two days' halt *en route* at Tromsø.

Tromsø we found in a somewhat excited condition by the return of an Arctic expedition. Their ship lay in the mud at an alarming-looking angle, and in due course we were invited on board. I shall not reveal the name of the ship which had just come in from a not very creditable voyage, and whose enterprise struck us as partaking more of the nature of an advertisement than of a serious attempt to reach the Pole. Some of her officers were at our hotel pending the completion of the repairs on the hull. They wore their hair after the manner of the actors in the Passion Play at Oberammergau. The captain was invisible, and we were given to understand that he would be in seclusion for an uncertain

RUSSIAN SHIPS AT TROMSØ.

To face page 254.

period; but the second officer, who had had confidence in the Tromsø barber, and was an extremely nice man, took us over the boat.

I had sometimes thought that a Polar expedition might have its attractions, but after seeing that ship I had no further desire ever to attempt such a thing. She was just as she had come in, and her deck was covered with a snarling pack of dogs and several small Russian ponies. Owing to the list, the surface was at a considerable angle, and walking extremely difficult, while the consequences of a slip were not to be contemplated. Between decks there were also dogs, and one held on to the rail with one hand and to one's nose with the other and heartily wished oneself ashore. It seemed ages before we could make good our escape, and the moment dry land was under our feet we dashed to the hotel and demanded its entire stock of hot water.

For days afterwards the recollection of that awful ship made us both feel perfectly ill; and even as I write a qualm of discomfort passes over me, and a mental picture that I would willingly forget is formed upon my mind.

CHAPTER XXII

SOME WATER EXPERIENCES

In most of the larger parts of both the north and south of Norway it is possible to hire a small steamer on moderate terms. We rebelled against being kept two or three days at Tromsø on the way to our camping ground, and sometimes took a private steamer to avoid the delay.

On one occasion a certain small craft that by now probably lies at the bottom of a fjord was got ready for us, and after much running backwards and forwards from the shops to the harbour had resulted in a perfect mountain of parcels, we got off about midnight.

Now these little steamers are all very well in calm water, but in the course of our voyage we had to round a headland of the Grötsund, and here one is unpleasantly exposed to the open sea. The water was at first like oil, and

we sped along comfortably enough while this state of things prevailed.

But presently a very curious occurrence took place. Looming ahead of us we saw a huge German tourist boat, churning up the water in her wake, but riding with the steadiness of an island. She passed us at rather closer quarters than we cared for, and our little steamer, low as she was in the water, tumbled about excitedly in the swell. And the strange part of the whole thing was that the swell never ceased for some hours after. In fact, at the moment that we passed the big ship we must also have entered upon a region of rough water.

Had a man such as Captain Bottolfson been on board, we should have felt quite happy under the circumstances, but our captain was not a person to inspire confidence, neither was he at all sure of the proper course to steer, though he was certainly an improvement on the individual who brought Messrs Claude and Leonard Rawlence to Holmebugt a year or so before, and who when in doubt steered for land and asked the way.

Our captain had a chart which he constantly consulted, and, judging from its spotted appearance, one would imagine that hidden rocks were everywhere to be expected. Even in still water the situation would not have been all one could wish. In the angry state of the sea it was most unpleasant. I nervously watched our progress from the grimy little deck, and kept ever glancing towards the mist-shrouded hills, behind which we might hope for shelter. The wind was in a bad quarter for us, and it was not till we had crept round the corner of the Isskartinder and were nearly opposite to Goevik that I breathed freely.

Another unpleasant experience we had much further south, in fact barely within the Arctic Circle. We were intent on exploring a certain river that we intended, if we found it satisfactory, to lease; and in order to reach it we had to pass through the most remarkable tidal race on the whole of the coast. This is at the mouth of the Saltenfjord, and it is only at certain states of the tide that it is navigable. We were in one of the little local mail steamers,

and when we arrived outside it was evident that the tide was not yet in our favour. We waited, I think, a couple of hours, and then the captain gave the word to advance. Steadily we steamed towards the narrow channel, and into and through it, the ship swerving slightly at times as the current caught her bows. The passage gave so little room that the rocky banks were quite close to us on both sides. It was a veritable bottle-neck, through which twice a day a vast quantity of water from the large inner fjord poured out, and twice a day it poured in, the whole of it having to pass through two narrow gateways.

We were told that one season when the *Hohenzollern* was cruising in these waters she attempted to pass through at an unfavourable hour, with the result that she very narrowly escaped shipwreck.

The famous Maelström near the Lofoten Islands, so familiar in tales of our childhood, is said to be far less formidable than that of the Saltenfjord. No doubt its vicinity to the herring fisheries has done much to establish its reputation, for when small sailing boats

got into it at the wrong moment they were often lost. A steamer can safely, I am told, pass over it at any time.

We seldom saw a whale on our northern travels. Once, just before entering the tidal race leading from the Ulfsfjord to the Sörfjord, we passed very close to one forging ahead at a great pace through the water. A seal we saw but once, when he came ashore at Holmebugt, and lay basking on the rocks just in front of our camp. The farmer most inhospitably hastened for his gun, and firing without due deliberation missed the poor thing, which wisely slid off an instant later into the water. Porpoises we often saw, tumbling gaily along in the wake of the ship.

A VIEW OF THE SÖRFJORD, TAKEN AT MIDNIGHT.

CHAPTER XXIII

PHOTOGRAPHY AND OTHER MATTERS

When living in camp, and especially in a country where the day lasts for twenty-four hours, it seemed to me that photography would present certain difficulties. To photograph is easy enough anywhere for the user of daylight changing films and professional development, but that sort of photography has never attracted me, and I make a practice of completing all my work on the spot. Besides, in the uncertain climate of the North, the development of one's negatives is a great resource on wet days, and one has the satisfaction, when one returns home to other engrossing occupations, of feeling that no accumulation of work lies before one.

Now the dark tents sold for the use of travellers seemed to me veritable abominations. They might serve for plate-changing, but to do justice to one's negatives when

cooped up in their stifling and narrow bounds I felt to be quite impossible. We therefore put our minds into the designing of a photography tent that should be portable, light-tight, quickly erected, and large enough for the worker to sit in at ease with a table before him, so that he could develop his plates in comfort.

The result was so satisfactory that the tent still is, and I am sure long will be, in use. It is oblong in shape, about 6 feet by 5, and a trifle over 5 feet high. It is of black fabric lined with red, and has a waterproof cover to be put on if used out of doors. Where the sides join the floor they are folded inwards, a foot of fold being allowed for, and a piece of strong waterproof just the size of the floor of the tent is then laid over it. The door has broad double flaps which can be buttoned either from the inside or outside, and which absolutely exclude the light. A red window just opposite the door can be made darker if required by buttoning over it another thickness of red, and two tables, one under the window and the other along the side, fit comfortably within it.

Though in the north I had with me only a quarter-plate camera, yet at a later time, when illustrating a book on Italian gardens with 12 by 10 plates, I still found the tent amply large, and used it throughout the whole of the time. The frame is of light varnished wood, and in six folding pieces. They fit into slots in each other, and are rendered perfectly steady by hooks and screws.

When one knows exactly how to set up the frame the tent can be unpacked and ready for use in five minutes. I carried the frame in a couple of strong canvas cases like golf club bags, and the tent was folded up and travelled at the bottom of a trunk.

The strength of the sun at midnight was deceptive. It looked as bright as day, but photography soon proved that this was by no means the case. After a few experiments I found that an exposure on a fast plate of the 50th of a second with f.8 resulted in a perfectly printable but not brilliant negative. To obtain good results, a time exposure is necessary.

During the day, high up on the mountains, one may work just as on the Alps. The greater frequency of cloud effects is a help

in securing pictorial results. Any views that include the fjords must have specially short exposures.

There is one feature of the north which I have alluded to in the foregoing pages, but a description of which may not be out of place in this chapter. The ice-lakes one so frequently meets with add to the picturesqueness of the more arid and uninteresting regions, between the line of vegetation and that of eternal snow. In Switzerland I know of but one good specimen, the Marjälen See, at the foot of the Aletsch glacier. There is a particularly striking one near Skagastoldstind, but in the north they are found everywhere amongst the higher mountains. I have already referred to that in the Fugledal. There are several more in the Stordinddal, and elsewhere. Often they are formed by the daming up of the main stream by the moraines of lateral glaciers, as is the case with the Mattmarksee; but whereas the latter, though frozen in winter, soon melts under the rays of the summer sun, the former remain partially frozen even in the hottest weather, and icebergs are often found floating on them even when no glacier foot descends into them.

AN ICE LAKE.

To face page 264.

I cannot but think that these icebergs are due to the different state of the snow in Arctic Norway to that of the Alps. As I have said in a previous chapter, the snow in the north is much wetter when it falls than Alpine snow. The warm sea air appears to impregnate it as it comes down, so that instead of a light, dry, powdery layer we have a thinner but far heavier coating. When, during the winter, a large quantity of snow falls, more consistent and binding than the winter snow of the Alps, it very soon must begin to turn into an icy mass which, when warm weather comes again, resists its influence far more than if it lay lightly, and tends not only to remain in blocks till quite late on into the summer, but also to form glaciers where under similar topographical conditions in Switzerland none would be found.

These blue patches of water, with their floating cubes of ice, form an acceptable foreground to the photographer, and many a picture of a stately peak owes its charm to the variety they lend. But the brush of the painter is needed in these regions, where not only form but colour is one of their greatest beauties. The colour has such amazing change-

fulness, too. In the valleys we find these sapphire lakes and glittering icebergs bordered by a flame of brilliant scarlet, when the hillside is clothed with bilberry. By the fjords it is the purples and clear greens that are so exquisite, and now and then an atmospheric pageant amazes us with its unearthly loveliness. One steamy, hazy morning I shall never forget the spectacle that greeted us as we stepped from our tents to the water's edge. We fairly rubbed our eyes with bewilderment, for everything was blue. It was a blue world we looked upon. We might have been gazing at it through a sheet of blue glass. Even as the blueness of the grotto at Capri, so was the blueness spread around us. It was just as if a blue gauze veil had been spread over the whole landscape. It heralded heavy rain later on, but while it lasted it seemed a veritable fairyland.

A very pretty sight, of which I never managed to obtain a photograph, was the bringing in of the hay by boat. In England one of the photographer's stock subjects is haymaking, and in some parts of Switzerland, notably in the Engadine, the Italian hay-

makers who gather in the crop form charming pictures. But haymaking by Jaegervand was quite unlike the occupation in more southern lands. The long, wet grass that bordered the lake was cut and hung on wooden frames, like rough five-barred gates. When it became a trifle less damp — for it seldom had a chance of drying completely— it was carried off to the village.

Whole families, bringing every boat they could procure, made a regular picnic of the occasion, and heaped up their craft till nothing but a floating hay-stack could be seen. Towards evening, when the boats would hold no more, the entire flotilla started homewards, the women and children lying on the hay, the men paddling along in other hay boats, towing the rest and propelling themselves as best they could with long oars. On the glassy, mirror-like surface of the water the procession, as it glided leisurely along, was most pictorial, and I have often regretted that I never happened to be ready with my camera on any of the rare occasions when we saw it.

CHAPTER XXIV

SOME WOMEN OF NORWAY

At the present moment, when Norway has but recently become a kingdom and has focussed upon itself the attention of the whole world, anything relating to its people, who in so peaceful a manner achieved so prompt a reversal of political conditions, must be of very special interest.

I am not a suffragette, because I lack the courage of my opinions, which entirely coincide with those of that courageous sisterhood. I believe that in Great Britain but one method avails for securing what any party desires. To obtain anything, it is essential to follow the methods of the importunate widow of Scripture, and whatever it is, right or wrong, if a body of persons make themselves sufficiently unpleasant during a sufficiently long time they will get it. We

have seen the result of these tactics in Ireland. We shall, I hope, see the result of equal persistence on another question which, however, deserves to be settled as its advocates desire. But in Norway the very reverse has happened, and a simple demand was sufficient for a nation to receive back again that which at an earlier stage of its history it had proved itself so worthy to possess.

The right and expediency of Norway thus starting her own *ménage* under her own king are no longer questioned. Her people are singularly law-abiding, and not her men only but also her women are exceptionally well educated. As a result, each member of her population has a sturdy independence which must contribute greatly to her stability. There appear to be few leaders of factions in religion, in extremes of political thought, or in the infinite number of fads which in our own country lead to such waste of time.

The women, though they work out of doors and do the hardest manual work, are not obliged to do so by the men. It is a matter of expediency; and while husbands and brothers are away fishing, it is natural that

wives and sisters should care for the land and the cattle. So self-respecting a people respect the rights of others, and with the security and enterprise that comes of a certainty that each will reap where he has sown, the country, in spite of its huge proportion of bog and mountain, does not give one an impression of poverty.

Its women are to be found in many departments, carrying on admirably the functions of public servants. Post and telegraph offices are often managed exclusively by women, who, accustomed to full control over the business, are not puffed up thereby, as is the case sometimes at home, where the young woman who presides behind the counter and distributes stamps at her pleasure is not always as affable as one might desire. The Norwegian postmistress in the smaller places, where business is slack, is often a delightful person. Well-mannered, pleasant to look at and speak to, cultivated, and dispensing hospitality in her own pretty sitting-room, with its books, its plants, its piano and its profusion of articles worked during long winter evenings, she is a good type of the Norwegian woman

of her class. She could certainly cook or superintend the cooking of an excellent dinner, and pull an oar across the water as well as any of her brothers.

As for the Norwegian servant-girls, those who have not been spoilt by service in cosmopolitan hotels or on steamers, but who are still in every sense true natives of their country, would be a godsend in many a harassed English family. Fishing parties sometimes take one of these maidens to cook for and attend on them, and the vast quantity of work she cheerfully accomplishes would amaze any one unused to her energy.

A friend who every year took a fishing in the north, told me that he had one such servant, and considered her very fully employed in doing maid-of-all-work for himself and two more members of his family. The little house where they lived was primitive in all its arrangements. Water had to be fetched from the stream close by, and no assistance was forthcoming in any department of the household *régime*.

After a time three men friends were expected to join the party, and my friend,

being of a considerate spirit, decided to get a second maid to lighten the duties of the first. To his amazement the news of her coming was received with floods of tears; and on his explaining that three extra daily baths to be carried up, three extra lots of garments and boots needing attention, and that three extra people would double the work, the young woman sobbed out that even then she would have far too little to do, and that it was evident her master was not satisfied with her or he would not dream of suggesting that two girls could possibly be required! Whereupon she turned her too ample leisure to account by ascending the mountain side and returning with a huge load of berries which she promptly turned into jam.

Norwegian girls think nothing of making long walking tours in the mountain district of their country, unescorted by any mere males. I have seen many such holiday parties, and have admired the brisk, independent way in which two or three young women will shoulder their knapsacks and start off for a tramp of several hours over the hills to their next resting-place. They have their food for

the day with them, and very likely they will hardly meet a single soul during the whole of their walk. But they don't care at all. They feel perfectly safe—and well they may in that country! — whether the track is deserted or whether they meet other travellers on it.

Norwegian women have usually a sincere admiration for English people. It is strange the confidence they display in us, and not only in those they meet in their own country but also in the inhabitants of the British Isles, who personally are quite unknown to them.

I recollect that on one occasion when returning home across the North Sea, a fellow-passenger on board the steamer told me a strange tale. In a remote valley where she and her husband rented a river a peasant family whom she often visited had two lovely daughters. The parents had somehow learnt of a situation in London which their children could go to, and, hastily putting their few possessions into a couple of bundles, they had started off. They were to sail by a boat

leaving the day before ours, and it was due to arrive in the docks in London at an early hour in the morning. My fellow-passenger was aghast when she pictured these two beautiful young creatures stepping on shore, their native shawls round their heads, each carrying her little bundle done up in a red handkerchief, a bit of paper with some distant address such as Clapham their sole credentials and totally ignorant of one word of English! She remarked to the parents: "Surely you must feel anxious, sending off your girls like that, with no one to receive them when they land!" "Oh no!" answered their father. "The English are such good people, they can come to no harm; and every one in London will be ready to help them!"

His faith in the British nation received ample confirmation, for the lady at once telegraphed to friends in London asking them to have the girls met on their arrival and escorted to their destination. So that valley still believes that in London people are even more kind and friendly to strangers than they would be in Christiania.

LAPPS AT LYNGSEIDET.

To face page 275.

CHAPTER XXV

THE LAPPS, THEIR ORIGIN AND CUSTOMS

I HAVE thought that a short account of the little people who were our only visitors in camp might be of interest in connection with our expedition in their country, especially as it is by no means easy when travelling there to find out anything about them. I am indebted for much of my information to an article by Professor A. H. Keane which appeared in the Journal of the Anthropological Institute of November 1885. This is by far the best treatise on the subject I have come across. An admirable little book in French is "Chez les Lapons," by Remy de Gourmont (1890); and there is also a work entitled "Through Arctic Lapland," by Cutliffe Hyne (1898), which gives an extremely interesting record of travel through the country by a route probably never before traversed by an Englishman.

There are, as most people are aware, Norwegian, Swedish and Russian Lapps, but it is of the first only that I shall write and with whom we had to do. They number about 15,000, and are divided into sea, river and mountain Lapps. The latter are nomads, wandering from pasture to pasture with their herds of reindeer. The others are either agriculturists along the fertile tracts by the rivers, or fishers by the sea. These naturally tend more and more to be merged in the population of the places they inhabit, and it is only the mountain Lapps who preserve the characteristics of their forefathers. They do not in Norway much exceed 1,000.

It is very puzzling at first to find the country folk of the north of Norway alluding to the Lapps as "Finner." The Finmarker of northern Norway corresponds with the Lappmarker of Sweden. This confusion is accounted for by the fact that the term "Lapp" is probably of comparatively late date. We first find it in a Norse document of about 1,200, and again as Lappar in Saxo Grammaticus (1230), and in a papal Bull of about

the same time. They always refer to themselves as "Finner."

English-speaking people invariably call these small folk Lapps, Swedes call them Lappa, Russians Lopari. This marks the connection of the Lapps with the Finnish family, of which they are an outlying branch. It is also the Teutonic translation of the original name *Samé*, plural *Samelats*, literally "Fen-men"—whence also comes *Samé-äduam*, "Fenland," or Finland. The Professor goes on to say in his learned treatise that others have traced the origin of the word "Lapp" differently. For instance, "Lappe-gunda" is Finnish for "Land's End"; and this word occurs in a report by two missionaries who visited the north of the country in 1220. Another explanation, that of a Norwegian, Professor Friis, refers the term to an old Finnish root *tapaa*, "to wander," in allusion to the nomad habits of the mountain Lapps. The more civilised Lapps refer to the northern Lapps as *Lappen*, meaning thereby that they are rude and barbarous.

The Lapps are the true aborigines of the country. Though not men of the soil,

springing as it were from the very ground on which they dwell, they seem undoubtedly to be the first inhabitants of the country they now inhabit, and have lived here from prehistoric times onwards.

Their migration seems to have been from Central Asia westwards. Their national legends contain dim traditions of their eastern origin, and their very name connects them with Finland as the last stage of their long wanderings. Their folklore contains descriptions which seem to indicate Lake Baikal itself as a point of dispersion for Lapp races. I confess when I came on this interesting suggestion in the Professor's pamphlet it seemed to give for the first time some reason beyond that of rapidity of transit for the otherwise desperately tedious journey by the Trans-Siberian railway, for I felt that a halt of a few days near Lake Baikal and a series of photographs of the people there might bring before one a resemblance to our Lapp friends, in spite of the immensely long period that must have elapsed since their migration began.

Thus the Lapps would appear to be an offshoot of the great Finno-Tataric (Uralo-Altaic) family which, besides extensive tracts in east Europe, occupies the whole of northern Asia as far south as the Chinese, Tibetan and Iranian frontiers. In speech and in some prominent physical characteristics they belong to this large portion of Asia. The Lapp language is very like Finnish, which itself is closely allied to the Tûrki and other members of the Mongolo-Tatar group.

These small people are the shortest in the whole of the eastern hemisphere, the decidedly dwarfish races alone excepted. They are strong and healthy as a rule, but invariably bandy-legged. This is said to be due to their being allowed to walk too young, and no doubt it often happens in the wandering life of the tribe that children of very tender years are encouraged to find their feet at an abnormally early age.

The Lapps have often been compared to the Eskimo, but in the opinion of most modern writers they are in many ways very different. The Eskimo still remain to a great

extent the type of the men of the earliest stone age.

About a thousand years ago the famous Norwegian navigator Ohthere, the first to round the North Cape and to explore the White Sea, put on record his observations of the inhabitants of what we now call Lapland. He described his voyage up the Norwegian coast, which he kept very close to, and he informed King Alfred that on his right he had waste land and on his left the sea. He disembarked from time to time, and the only people he saw in the north were Finns, who were fishermen, fowlers and hunters. Ohthere spoke with the king and told him that he possessed six hundred tame deer of his own breeding; of these six were decoy deer, which were always looked upon as very valuable. This would seem to indicate that in olden times herds of reindeer were kept in southern parts of Norway where they are now no longer found. Such as the Lapps were in the time of King Alfred, such were they six centuries later when visited by the British ship *Search-*

thrift. Her captain wrote of them that they were "a wild people which neither knew God nor yet good order. And these people live in tents of deerskin and have no certain habitation, but continue in companies of a hundred or two hundred."

All their needs are even in the present day supplied by their reindeer. Food, clothing, bedding, tents, household utensils, means of locomotion, all these they owe to their herds. From the sinews of the animals they make cordage, and from the bones many useful and curious articles are carved, and their sale brings in the money with which they buy flour and bread. The thick milk of the reindeer is made into cheese. The flesh of the animal fetches a good price, as do such skins as are not required for their own use.

Of the nomads who own herds — and a poor man will own 100 head, while a rich Lapp is said to have sometimes as many as 8,000—some stay with them all the year round, moving in winter to Swedish Lapland in search of moss for their animals, and

returning in summer to Norwegian Lapland; others leave their herds to run wild on the mountains and go down themselves to the coast, where they fish and barter their wares with travellers. On their return the animals are collected and handed over to their respective owners, being identified by means of marks cut or branded on the reindeer soon after birth.

It is said that young reindeer are trained for harness by being tied by a long rope or by reins to the top of a small pliant birch tree and left to struggle. In the end the animal finds he has to submit, and he is then ready to make his first attempt at drawing a sledge.

Female reindeer have horns somewhat smaller than those of the males. They shed them in the spring, while the males shed theirs in the autumn. The horns of both begin to appear a few weeks after birth. The reindeer of Norway is identical with the cariboo of North America.

The grazing grounds must not be grazed every year. Some pasturage requires four,

A LAPP AND HIS DOG.

To face page 282.

others as much as five years' rest before it is fit for the herds to return to it.

When a child is born a reindeer is set apart for him, and, with its progeny, belongs inalienably to him. Thus is laid the foundation of his future fortunes, and he can never be wholly without property.

The dogs by which the Lapps are invariably accompanied seem of a type intermediate between the so-called Pomeranian and the Eskimo dog. They are never used to draw sleighs, but are kept solely for herding the deer, in carrying out which duty they are singularly quick and intelligent.

Lapps were water-drinkers in olden days, but now they indulge freely in spirits. Indeed, their great fault is said to be intemperance. Nevertheless they are a peaceable, good-natured, rather lazy race. They treat their women and children well.

The women sew the tents and their own clothes and those of their family with thread made from the tendons of the deer. They also embroider with silver thread, and have a knowledge of how to dye cloth. Their

needles are three-sided, and I have more than once seen a Lapp fetch a needle-case out of his garments — for they seem destitute of pockets, thrusting objects they desire to keep safe into the breasts of their coats — and calmly mend his boots without removing them. On one occasion, when this operation was in progress on the steps of our hut, I offered a long and strong English needle, but our visitor politely but firmly informed us that his own was better—and I think it was.

The various families of a settlement appear to agree well, and often two families will live in one tent. Their cradles are very peculiar, being hollowed from the trunk of a tree. A hood protects the baby's head, and a framework of cord enables the whole concern to be so enveloped with wraps that the infant lies completely protected from cold on a journey and cannot be hurt even if the cradle turns over.

It must be confessed that Lapps are usually extremely dirty. Some wear their garments of reindeer all the year round. Others, more luxurious, have one set of fur for winter, and

SOME LAPPISH WOMEN.

To face page 284.

a set of cloth or serge for summer. No linen is worn underneath. To their sides hang big knives, even tiny boys having knives nearly as large as themselves. They are nearly all, women as well as men, inveterate smokers. Their boots are made in but two pieces, and the shape will be best seen in the accompanying photographs. They are wonderfully water-tight and extremely comfortable, and both Aubrey and I purchased similar boots at Trondhjem, and have since used them with the utmost satisfaction in Switzerland in winter.

Many of the Lappish ceremonies preserve much of the people's ancient superstition. The deer who draws the body of a dead Lapp to the grave is sacrificed afterwards, and its flesh is eaten by the family at the first meal for which they assemble after the funeral. The bones of the animal are put in a sack and buried near the deceased. Weapons are also often put in as well, and, in the case of women, sewing materials.

On the anniversary of a death the sacrifice of a reindeer is often repeated. It is said

that money is never put in graves as it might be stolen, but there are amazing tales of wonderful treasure-houses in caves in the mountains and near the borders of glaciers where the dead can go and take the gold and silver laid up during their lives.

They still preserve in most families a sort of drum with signs painted on it and metal rings hanging from it. No stranger may see it, and so carefully is it hidden away that it is hopeless to try and get a glimpse of it. These drums are often extremely ancient and are used for fortune-telling.

Christianity was first introduced amongst the Norwegian Lapps more than a century ago by the Danish missionary, Thomas Von Westen. He is regarded as the Apostle of the Lapps. Like many other newly-converted races their faith takes the form of a sort of Lutheran revival, occasionally leading to all the hysterical symptoms observable in such sects.

Since then education has also been carried on, and now nearly all can read or write. But in spite of this and of their contact with

so highly educated a race as the Norwegians, they show but little liking for modern ways of thought, and preserve their own language amongst themselves. They declare that it suits their occupations far better than Norsk, and as they have about ten different words for reindeer, twenty for ice, eleven for cold, forty-one for snow, and twenty-six verbs to express freezing and thawing, they may be right.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE NORTHERN PLAYGROUND FOR GUIDELESS CLIMBERS

It will, perhaps, have been remarked during the accounts of ascents in the preceding pages that two of the gravest dangers encountered in Alpine climbing, and indeed in climbing anywhere else on glacier-clad peaks except in our northern playground, are there non-existent.

How many deaths on the roll of mountaineering victims were due to cold! How many were owing to exposure, the result of being benighted! These two dangers usually go hand in hand, and we who have climbed for many years past know full well that the really experienced mountaineer seldom or never loses his life under such conditions. But the Alps are thronged by the inexperienced, led as a

rule by the less competent guides, or else venturing by themselves on ground only fit for skilled climbers.

If those who wish to scramble unaided and at but a small cost would turn their attention to the north of Norway they would be able to carry on their pastime in comparative safety, if they observe the following rules, and are sufficiently observant in reading the warnings written on the mountains themselves.

Never go alone on an expedition.

Never be unroped on a snow-covered glacier.

Never go in gulleys where dirty marks on the snow indicate that stones are in the habit of falling.

Never climb immediately above each other where the rock is loose.

Now, were I writing for those intending to climb in the Alps I would add warnings against snow avalanches, cornices, cold and darkness, and I would strongly advise learning the craft during two or three seasons' climbing with a first-rate guide. But for many

the expense would render this apprenticeship impossible. For others, three seasons as a pupil would seem extremely tiresome, and they would welcome an opportunity of casting off the leading-strings and both planning and carrying through their ascents themselves. Added to the charm of independence would be the still greater one of exploring untrodden ground; and if two or three men chose to plan a few weeks' climbing in northern Norway they might have a safe, healthful, delightful and interesting holiday at a cost absurdly small as compared with what would be needed for guides, hotel bills, and tips in Switzerland.

I should not think of counselling one who had never been on a mountain to provide himself with books on the subject and then set out without any practical experience to climb the Deut Blanche. Even if he tried to go up it with "The Complete Mountaineer" and the "Badminton" volume on the same subject at his fingers' ends, he might still find himself sitting on a breezy ledge at midnight. But if the novice cares to follow the simple

rules I have given him, and to study the peaks of Arctic Norway with a seeing eye and moderately intelligent mind, he should not come to grief there. At the worst, he may choose the wrong way up and so fail to reach the top, but he will with experience grow skilled in selecting a possible route, and the choosing of it is one of the keenest pleasures of the sport.

He need fear fatigue and strain far less than in the Alps, for he can rest as often and for as long as his supply of food permits; and the strain on the heart of mounting from sea-level to 6,000 feet is infinitely less than when ascending from 6,000 feet to 12,000 feet and upwards. Thus mountain sickness may be written off the ailments he need fear, and there are certain keen climbers to whom mountain sickness is so strong a deterrent that I wonder they do not try just the one place where glaciers and fine peaks may be ascended without any risk of it.

I suppose that nowhere else in the world can really Alpine surroundings be found with a mild temperature even during the very worst

weather in summer and perpetual daylight. It will be obvious how enormous a safeguard these two facts provide.

Dangers from avalanches and cornices I have also ignored, but on a very few occasions there may be some risk from the former. After snow has fallen heavily for a few days on the mountains — and it is rare for this to happen in summer—the climber must beware of trusting himself on steep slopes till it has consolidated. The snow is unlike Alpine snow, as I have explained in a previous chapter, for it is much wetter. It therefore begins to bind sooner, and is safe at a far earlier period than in Switzerland. One hardly ever sees an avalanche of summer snow, and I have never come across one of formidable dimensions. As for cornices, I have seldom seen one; and I do not recollect a single cornice of the size of the well-known cornices on the Gabelhorn or Lyskam. It is, I fancy, always possible in northern Norway to avoid all risk on this account.

Ice avalanches, of course, there always may be wherever there are large glaciers. But

the person of observation, seeing that a slope has trained upon it this formidable battery of mountain artillery, will avoid passing within range, and will thus escape all danger. For the benefit of those who have never yet climbed, I may explain that ice avalanches are due to the movement of glaciers. So long as a glacier glides downwards over ground of an almost imperceptible slope, so long will its surface be nearly unbroken; but when the slope steepens the glacier has to bend over, and, in doing so, it splits across here and there owing to the unequal tension between the surface and the layer at the bottom. So soon as the declivity is set at a considerable angle, the cracks become frequent and a whole network of crevasses results. These are occasionally so profound that they leave great wedges of ice and snow standing between them, and as these move on they lean over more and more and finally overbalance.

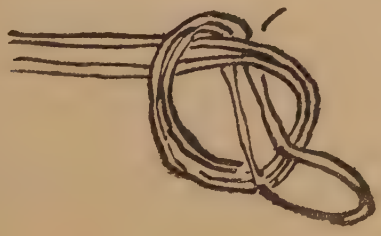
Mountaineers sometimes force their way through a maze of these tottering pinnacles, technically called an ice-fall, and it is only

during the cold of early morning, before the sun has begun to act on them, that it is at all safe to thread a way through them.

Fortunately, in the north, we had never to pass through a place such as I have described, but they exist there, and I can imagine expeditions when the only way might be by such a route. The ice avalanches which climbers in our playground have to beware of are those where a glacier comes to the edge of a tall cliff and periodically discharges huge blocks over the edge as the great mass above continues to advance. Such places should be carefully looked for by the tyro, and given a wide berth at all hours of the day and night.

The risk of crossing an apparently unbroken snow-field without a rope may not be apparent to the person who has never made excursions above the snow-line. The rope, unless properly used, is a danger rather than a safeguard, and it is well, therefore, for the beginner to know both how to put it on and how to use it. The quickest and simplest way, and that usually adopted by guides, is

to make a loop thus and pull it tight. This



is properly a middleman's noose, but the men at either end can use it also if very careful to make the loose end firm with an extra knot or two. A rope 80 feet long is sufficient for a party of three, allowing equal distances between each.

When crossing a snow-covered glacier, the front man has the knot at his back. The others have theirs at their sides, and in their left hands they hold a little slack—half a yard or so, just enough to lessen the shock should the front man suddenly drop through into a concealed crevasse. The rope must be kept taut, otherwise it is worse than useless. On rocks it is an everlasting vexation to the spirit, but wherever there is a risk of a slip, it must be put on.

In the north it is particularly difficult to use well, on account of the steepness and extraordinary looseness of the rocks. Such rock-faces as one meets with in northern Norway would, if in the Alps, have abandoned an upright life long ago, and would now be forming stone shoots in the valleys. An unwary movement when the rope has, unremarked, coiled itself round a projecting boulder, and half the peak may instantly descend. The rope must be watched, and lengthened and shortened, and held clear of entanglements, and kept free of kinks, and unceasingly humoured the entire time the party is on steep rocks, or evil will come of it. There is but one safeguard in such places, and that is perpetual watchfulness and extreme deliberation of movement, and in time the neatness acquired by the climbers in moving over unstable ground will be one of the rewards that is seldom withheld.

Owing to the low elevation of the northern sun a curious feature will sometimes be found on the snow-fields. A crevice may be almost masked from above by an eave of snow that

overhangs it, and if the weather is cloudy it may easily entrap the climber should he rapidly descend a steepish slope. Indeed, in cloudy weather he should be especially careful on snow, as owing to the lack of shadow it is most difficult to tell whether the slope is a gentle or a severe one. Ski-runners in winter know this well, and avoid as far as possible starting on expeditions in sunless weather.

The amateur who proposes to make long, guideless expeditions in the north may, for a moment, be a little discouraged by the idea of having to do all his own porterage. Let him remember, however, that this is a far less serious business than in the Alps. Instead of several bottles of wine, which guides take for themselves and their Herren in Switzerland—I knew two veterans who invariably required sixteen bottles for a certain famous climb that shall be nameless—no liquid except a small bottle of cream need be put in the knapsack. The spirit-lamp and kettle and a packet of tea will keep one going as long as desired; and it is seldom that water

cannot be obtained, while, if none can be had, there is certain to be snow that can be melted. So much for the drinks.

As for the food, that is nowhere a heavy weight, and a pair of woollen gloves and a scarf comprise the whole of the extra garments that in this mild and ever-daylight land can be needed. No lantern is necessary, no wood to carry to huts, or extra food and clothing for sleeping out. One member of the party can easily carry for the other two, and if all take the *rücksack* in turns it will be little felt.

One friend I had who refused to profit by the opening Arctic Norway presents for climbing without impedimenta. I will not disclose his identity, but when I saw him set off for an expedition across one or two glacier-capped peaks with an extremely large alarum clock on the top of his bag, and a pail of soup stock in the bottom, I marvelled at the strange outlets Englishmen find for their superfluous energy. It is difficult to conceive a country where an alarum clock would ordinarily be of less use, but when he told me that he always went on sleeping till something awoke him, I

realised that the alarum clock was intended to fulfil the functions of a calender. One could imagine, were he without one, that he might easily lose count of the greater part of his holiday.

The soup stock, however, could not last for ever, and I have a dim recollection of its at last returning to our camp over the mountains, and the pail being deposited on our threshold with a parting suggestion that it still contained some vestiges of Tromsø mutton. I fancy the little fish close by would have quarrelled less furiously over it had they known it as well as we did!

It would be useless to think of finding a native porter on the spot. None of the natives ever venture on the glaciers or attempt to climb any of the peaks. They are badly shod, and even the professional guides in the south of Norway seldom have nails in their boots. They would be worse than useless on a mountain, and so a party must count only on its own members once it leaves its camp.

I have left till the last the one real danger of climbing in the far north, that from stones

which fall down gullies. The peaks are nearly all streaked with snow *couloirs*, and nowhere is the verb *couloir*—to flow—more appropriately applied. The *couloirs*, or gullies, are usually filled with hard, icy, dirty-looking snow, with a black groove down the centre from top to bottom. Except under particularly favourable conditions they should be absolutely avoided. They are only safe when the snow they contain is white and soft, for then, if a stone fell from above, it would at once become embedded and be thus rendered harmless.

These gullies, on hot days, present a truly fearful spectacle, being constantly swept by falling stones, which leave behind a thick dust and a smell as of gunpowder that linger long in the air. I remember once seeing the *couloir* of the Old Weissthor swept by a stone avalanche, and Imboden termed the place under such circumstances "diabolical." In Arctic Norway I know many such *couloirs*, and they are swept with such regularity that one wonders any rocks are left above. Even a complete novice, if he uses his eyes, can see how dangerous it would be to try and ascend

by such a route. It is often by far the shortest way up a mountain, but would very likely offer the quickest if the least desirable and totally involuntary way down again.

By the foregoing remarks the would-be climber who desires to learn mountaineering without the aid of guides, and both safely and inexpensively, will, I think, admit that no better training ground than the Land of the Midnight Sun can be found. Most books on climbing advise the novice to practise on the peaks of Wales and other mountain districts in Great Britain, and no doubt much valuable experience can be gained there.

But there is an ever-present risk of being benighted, with its unpleasant and even dangerous possibilities, and nothing can be learnt of ice craft, so that when those who have only made ascents in the British Isles first attempt Alpine climbing, they have to do with a feature that is totally strange to them, and which is on a much more formidable scale than they will find in the north. After a few seasons in Arctic Norway it should be possible to take up guideless climbing in the

Alps; and if the climbers are of such stuff, mentally and physically, as would justify their undertaking really formidable expeditions, they may by degrees go on from the lesser to the greater, till they are equal to the best parties on any peak in the world.

Climbing nowadays has become so scientific that with the aid of the many excellent books there are on the subject, supplemented by a few seasons' practical experience in northern Norway, men may become skilled and prudent mountaineers without any of that guided apprenticeship which in the early days of the sport was essential to the acquirement of the principles and practice of the pastime.

MY CLIMBS IN ARCTIC NORWAY

Goevertind (*first recorded ascent*)
Kjostind (*second ascent, first from the Lyngen side*)
Isskartind (*second ascent, new route*)
Sofietind (*first ascent*)
Sultind (*first ascent*)
Skraektind (*first ascent*)
Stortind (*second ascent*)
Firedalentind (*first ascent*)
Forholttind (*first ascent*)
Kjoempes Tand (*first ascent*)
Taffeltind (*first ascent*)
Elizabethtind (*first ascent*)
Klyverrokke (*first ascent*)
Gyldenrokke (*first ascent*)
Faestning (*first ascent*)
Kristianstind (*first ascent*)
Holmebugttind (*first ascent*)
Durmaalstind (*second ascent, Mr Hastings and his porter having reached the summit by a different route half an hour previously*)
Jaggisjokka (*first recorded ascent*)
Eastern Laxelvtind (*first ascent*)
Sphinx (*first ascent*)
Andersdalskar (*first crossing*)
Hundbjergtind (*first ascent*)
Tomastind (*first ascent*)
Imbodentind (*first ascent*)
Balkisvarre (*first ascent*)
Balkisvarrenebbe (*first ascent*)

Njalavarrenebbe (*first ascent*)
Fugledalstind (*first ascent*)
Lerbugttind (*first ascent*)
Sommerbugttind (*second ascent*)
Joekkevarre (*third ascent*)
Joekkevarrenebbe (*first ascent*)

These ascents were duly recorded in *The Alpine Journal.*

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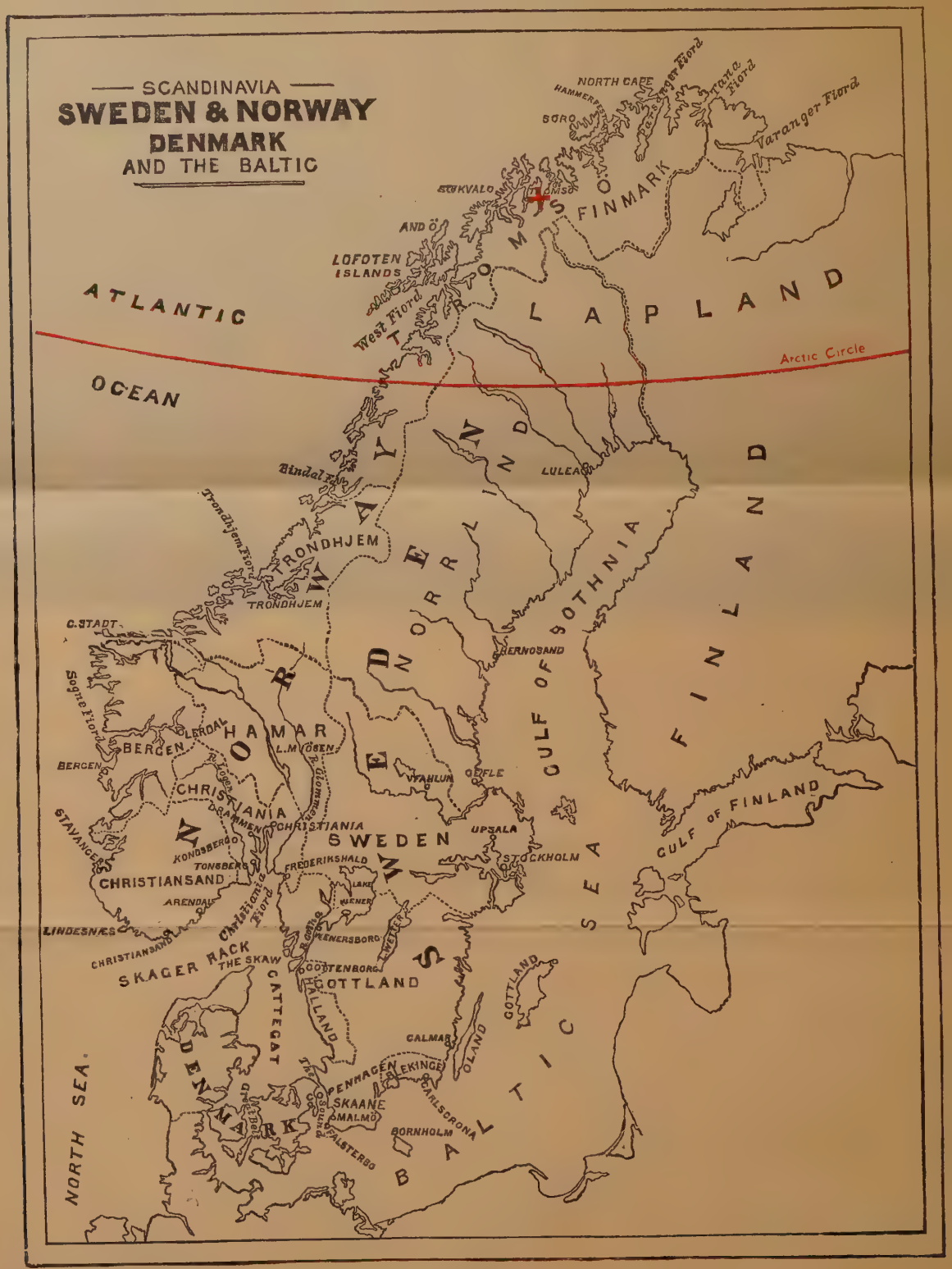
304



LONDON: T. FISHER UNWIN.

+ The district described in "Mountaineering in the Land of the Midnight Sun."